AN EXAMINATION OF IDEOLOGY AND SUBJECT FORMATION AMONG ELITE AND ORDINARY RESIDENTS IN THE BAKKEN SHALE, NORTH DAKOTA, 2015-2016

A Dissertation

by

THOMAS ANDREW LODER

Submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Chair of Committee,	Christian Brannstrom
Committee Members,	Forrest Fleischman
	Wendy Jepson
	Kathleen O'Reilly
Head of Department,	David Cairns

August 2018

Major Subject: Geography

ABSTRACT

The US shale energy boom of the late 2000s and 2010s has brought both economic growth and negative externalities to communities undergoing extraction. Building on previous research on fracking landscapes – as well as geographies of energy and natural resources and case studies of environmental subjectivity in extractive zones – this dissertation employed a suite of qualitative methods to examine the discourses and ideology used to support and oppose fracking-led development in North Dakota's Bakken Shale.

The dissertation consists of three substantive chapters. The first employs key actor interviews and participant observation to examine how pro-oil ideology is advanced by economic and political elites in North Dakota. This chapter concludes that elites frame support for oil as an extension of existing conservative ideologies prevalent in the state.

The second substantive chapter consists of content analysis of coverage of oil-related events in state-level newspapers, specifically concentrating on a 2014 conservation ballot measure and the Keystone XL pipeline. This chapter concludes that pro-oil writers are more effective in their messaging due to focusing on economic and emotional appeals.

The final substantive chapter uses interviews and focus groups to gauge fracking opinions of residents of Minot, a key city in the Bakken Shale. This chapter concludes that residents find cultural changes related to oil and gas development of greater consequence than political or economic changes.

CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

This work was supported by a dissertation committee consisting of Professor Christian Brannstrom and Professors Wendy Jepson and Kathleen O'Reilly of the Department of Geography and Professor Forrest Fleischman of the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

Research was supported by a Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant from the National Science Foundation Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (#1536201), a Dissertation Year Fellowship (2017-2018), an Energy Institute Research Fellowship (2014-2015) and a Glasscock Graduate Research Fellowship (2014), all from Texas A&M University.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several people aided me in the completion of this dissertation. My great uncle LaVern Neff hosted me in Williston during my preliminary research trip and took me on my first tour of the oilfields. During this same trip, I was able to stay rent free at my uncle, Thomas Wentz, Jr.'s house in Minot. Uncle Tommy also took me as his guest to the 2014 North Dakota Association of Telecommunication Cooperatives conference, which provided me with my first experience with North Dakota politics. Thanks must also be given to each of my grandfathers; Thomas Wentz, Sr. for sparking my initial interest in North Dakota and LeRoy Loder for putting me in contact with many key Minot respondents.

My adviser Christian Brannstrom served as a tireless advocate for both me and my research throughout my graduate career. Additionally, he took time and care in reviewing my writings and pushed me in countless superior directions that have led to this dissertation being radically improved from its initial drafting.

My parents, John and Elizabeth Loder, provided untold support throughout my graduate career, for which they deserve praise.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Emily, for her unending emotional support throughout this project. Without her patience and love, completing the dissertation would have proved a far more daunting task.

NOMENCLATURE

CCW	Concerned-Citizen Writer
DP	Dickinson Press
DU	Ducks Unlimited
FF	Fargo Forum
FTZ	Foreign Trade
IAW	Industry-affiliated Writer (petroleum)
IGW	Interest-Group Writer (non-petroleum)
KXL	Keystone XL pipeline
LEW	Local Editorial Writer (within ND)
LTE	Letter-to-the-Editor
M4	Measure 4
M5	Measure 5
MDN	Minot Daily News
NDCSC	North Dakotans for Common Sense Conservation
NSC	Nationally-Syndicated Columnist
OHF	Outdoor Heritage Fund
TT	Tioga Tribune
WH	Williston Herald

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study topic and goals

Hydraulic fracturing (hereinafter fracking) has emerged as the premier method for extractive oil and natural gas from hydrocarbon-bearing shale deposits. The process involves injecting a mixture of water, chemicals and solids such as sands and salts (referred to as proppants) into a drilled well in order to create and enlarge fractures in the shale, thus allowing oil and gas to be released and more easily collected. Fracking is frequently combined with horizontal drilling, thus allowing for large geographical areas to be successfully harvested with a minimum of vertical wells needing to be drilled, thus reducing surface-level oil infrastructure such as pumpjacks (Texas Oil and Gas Association, 2018). The expansion of fracking from the late 2000s to the present has allowed the United States to nearly double its crude oil production (from ~5,000,000 to ~9,300,000 barrels/day) and increase natural gas production by nearly a third (from ~63,000,000,000 to ~100,000,000,000 cubic feet/day) since 2008. Indeed, the United States' total petroleum production increased from third place worldwide in 2008 to first in 2013, a position the United States had not held since 2002 and had not held for more than 1 consecutive year since 1996 (United States Energy Information Administration, 2018b). Research from the National Bureau of Economic Research (Gilje, Ready, & Roussanov, 2016) has estimated that the total effects of fracking (lowered energy costs, lowered manufacturing costs, increased employment, etc.) were worth $3.5 trillion to the United States economy between 2012 and 2016.

However, fracking has inspired significant controversy. Despite inconclusive evidence, scientific studies have raised concerns about fracking's impact on the environment, particularly in regards to water and air quality and the role of fracking wastewater injection in causing seismic disturbance (see Chapter 2.3 for a more complete review). Scientists have argued that the environmental benefits from replacing coal with natural gas may be less than projected, and that such a strategy will do little to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change (Howarth, 2014). Additionally, both popular and academic literatures have demonstrated the negative externalities such as increased crime, infrastructure damage and housing competition that have plagued communities in shale production areas (known as shale plays) (see Chapter 2.3).

The major goal of this dissertation is to understand how ideologies and subjectivities related to support for the oil industry are created in North Dakota, which is the center of production for the shale play known as the Bakken Formation. The dissertation then examines how these subjectivities effect Bakken residents' understandings of the present oil boom and resulting development. While much is known regarding perceptions of fracking in other US shale plays in states such as Colorado, Pennsylvania and Texas, comparatively little such attention has been paid to the Bakken. Additionally, existing studies are divided between macro-scale, non-ethnographic analyses of fracking policy and micro-scale case studies of fracking externalities in shale plays, with findings from each approach rarely being used to inform the other. To address these gaps, this dissertation examines three key thematic areas related to fracking in the Bakken, each involving the use of discourse: 1.) the ways in which elite level discourses

supportive of fracking are created and disseminated; 2.) how discourses about fracking are used by newspaper editorial writers to support both pro- and anti-fracking arguments; and 3.) how permanent residents of the city of Minot, North Dakota (a key administrative, financial and transportation hub for the Bakken) understand and interpret the fracking boom and how discourses affect these interpretations.

This introductory chapter begins by outlining the major research question, data sources and key findings from the dissertation's substantive chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). Second, this chapter introduces the dissertation's study area and explains its importance to overall domestic oil production. Finally, this chapter concludes by reviewing the dissertation's key aims, as well as previewing the dissertation's literature review and research design chapters.

1.2 Overview of substantive chapters

This dissertation consists of three substantive chapters, each of which are connected through the themes of discourse and values. The key findings from the chapters will be discussed in the following paragraphs and are also summarized in Table 1 (p.4).

Chapter	Research Question	Data Sources	Key Findings
Homo Dakoticus (Chapter 4)	- How do oil and gas elites promulgate pro-oil discourses and to what policy ends are they dedicated?	- Interviews and participant observation with oil and gas elites	- Elites combine pro-oil rhetoric with existing conservative ideologies
Editorial Analysis (Chapter 5)	- Which discourses are prominent in newspaper editorials on key oil and gas topics and how do writers employ them?	- Editorials in North Dakota newspapers on the topic of Measure 5 (M5) and the Keystone XL pipeline (KXL)	- Pro-industry writers viewed issues in terms of economic gains and losses and focused on emotional appeals
Minot Resident Opinions (Chapter 6)	- How do longer-term residents understand and experience fracking and what role do discourses play in their interpretations?	- Interviews and focus groups with Minot residents	- Residents were unwilling to directly criticize the oil industry for externalities

Table 1: Research Questions, Data Sources and Key Findings from Substantive Chapters.

1.2.1 Chapter 4 overview

Chapter 4 uses a combination of key actor interviews conducted with North Dakota-based oil and gas elites (politicians, regulators, lobbyists and allied business people) and observation of elites at oil and gas conferences. This chapter builds on research that has examined the role of elite-created subjectivities in extractive zones, a literature that has ignored fracking. The major research question this chapter addresses is: How do oil and gas elites promulgate pro-oil discourses and to what policy ends are they dedicated? This chapter argues that elites have integrated pro-oil rhetoric into conservative ideologies that are already prominent at both the state and community levels in North Dakota, building on earlier work (Loder, 2016b). Three discursive themes are particularly prominent in the public and private statements of oil and gas elites: 1.) The North Dakota Way; 2.) North Dakota exceptionalism and resiliency.

The North Dakota Way is an existing code of conduct that emphasizes patriotism, self-sacrifice for the collective good and a consensus-based politics that avoids contentious debate. This ideology is conservative, emphasizing traditional moral values, community self-reliance and a disdain for governmental interference in private decision making. Thus, support for oil and gas, which is framed as a capitalist, pro-national security project grafts well onto the North Dakota Way. Second, North Dakota exceptionalism is the belief that North Dakota is a state blessed with productive surface (farming) and sub-surface (oil and coal) capacity and that its residents are harder working, more diligent and more moral than their counterparts in other states (especially liberal states on the East and West coasts). By appealing specifically to North Dakota exceptionalism, elites seek

to flatter residents about their roles in supporting oil and gas (framed as the main driver of North Dakota's economy), thus creating a personal connection between residents and the oil and gas industry. In the North Dakota context, resiliency refers not to the ability to recover from environmental disasters, but to the notion that North Dakotans are mentally, emotionally and physically tougher than other Americans due to their mythologized history of being hardy peasants who have survived all obstacles to thrive in the unforgiving landscape of the Great Plains. Elites specifically invoke the resiliency discourse to persuade residents that they are more than capable of withstanding negative externalities related to fracking in order to reap the eventual gains from the practice. This discourse was especially prominent during the post-2014 oil price slump, as elites sought to argue that North Dakotans were doing an excellent job of "not bailing on the Bakken" despite job losses, budget shortfalls and increased crime that had occurred in many Bakken cities.

The three major findings from this chapter are: 1.) Elites combined pro-oil rhetoric with existing conservative ideologies and discourses in order to convince the public of the industry's value in North Dakota; 2.) Elites made the oil industry personal to North Dakota residents by placing them within historical narratives that inflate the importance of residents in local, state and national processes such as economic development and national security; and 3.) Elites depicted oil as both natural and desirable, thus making it acceptable for state residents to embrace as they have other productivist ventures such as farming.

1.2.2 Chapter 5 overview

Chapter 5 analyzes editorials published in five North Dakota newspapers (four of which are published in Bakken cities) on two major topics: Measure 5 (M5) and the Keystone XL pipeline (KXL). This work specifically builds on previous research on newspaper analysis of fracking, but seeks to broaden this approach by both introducing the Bakken as a topic of analysis and by focusing on editorial coverage, which has been neglected by scholars. Editorial writers were separated based on whether they took a pro-industry (opposing M5 or supporting KXL) or anti-industry (supporting M5 or opposing KXL) position. The major research question this chapter addresses is: What are the prominent discourses used in these arguments and how do writers employ them to support their opinions? This chapter argues that pro-industry writers focused on making emotional appeals, whereas anti-industry writers focused on logical appeals. It is posited that pro-industry writers were better able to craft a successful narrative around their positions, thus making them more appealing to a broader range of readers.

M5 was a 2014 statewide ballot amendment that would have allowed the state government to use a portion of collected oil production tax to fund conservation projects. Although the measure ultimately failed by a four-to-one margin, it was the most debated topic in an initial sample of more than 1,500 articles. Both groups of writers sought to situate their arguments in terms of the effects the measure would have on North Dakota's rural heritage, private property rights and agricultural economy. Pro-industry writers argued that M5 would destroy rural North Dakota by allowing well-funded environmentalists to purchase large tracts of land, thus pricing most North Dakotans out

of opportunities to farm and recreate. In contrast, measure stated that M5 would provide more choices for land owners interested in conservation, while helping to improve environmental quality. Opponents, however, expended energy rebutting conservative rather than forming a counter-narrative, thus it is posited that their arguments were not seen as persuasive based on the lopsided electoral outcome.

KXL is a proposed expansion of TransCanada's existing Keystone system, which transports oil sands from Alberta to refineries on the Gulf Coast. KXL was seen in dramatically different terms by pro- and anti-industry writers. Pro-industry writers argued that the pipeline was a project that would provide many benefits to the US in terms of economic growth, reduction in foreign oil and in strengthening the country's relationship with the nation's closest ally and trading partner, Canada. Supporters argued that the pipeline posed no environmental or economic risk, thus making opposition to it irrational. Moreover, supporters argued that the pipeline would explicitly benefit the Bakken due to ~1/10th of North Dakota's crude oil production being added to carried sands to reduce their thickness and toxicity (the veracity of this claim is described in more detail in Chapter 5.3.2). KXL opponents, however, felt that KXL posed not only the traditional environmental risks of oil pipelines, but that these risks were enhanced due to carrying sands, which opponents argued were more difficult to remediate in the event of a spill and a greater driver of greenhouse emissions than other types of oil and gas. Additionally, opponents felt that KXL was an attack on private property rights and tribal sovereignty, due to landowners and Native American tribes having little recourse to oppose their land being seized for construction.

The major findings from this chapter are: 1.) Pro-industry writers viewed issues largely through the lens of economic gains and losses; 2.) Anti-industry writers were more concerned with making logical appeals and viewed issues through an environmental lens; and 3.) Pro-industry writers were more successful in crafting persuasive narratives in which they could situate their arguments.

1.2.3 Chapter 6 overview

Chapter 6 employs a combination of interviews and focus groups with non-elite, longer-term residents (defined as permanent residents of more than five consecutive years) of Minot, North Dakota in order to gauge their opinions of the fracking boom as it has occurred in their city. This chapter specifically builds on previous such studies in other shale plays, however, integrates concerns of ideology and subjectivity alongside analyses of local impacts. Minot's current boom and bust cycle is situated within the city's hundred-year history of industrial booms and busts. The major research question this chapter addresses is: How do longer-term residents understand and experience fracking and what role do discourses play in their interpretations? Three major thematic areas are addressed: 1.) The boom's impacts on housing and recovery from the 2011 Souris River Flood; 2.) The boom's impact on crime and the purported decline of moral values; and 3.) How the economic gains from the boom can be leveraged to modernize and diversify Minot's economy for an eventual post-oil future. This chapter argues that residents view negative externalities not as the fault of the oil industry, but as extensions of long-standing political and cultural issues that have plagued the city.

First, housing was viewed as being severely impacted by the flood due to increased competition from in-migrants drawn by oil-related jobs. This competition was viewed as exacerbating housing problems following the 2011 flood, which destroyed one third of the city's housing stock. Residents, though, largely blamed these problems on the city government and landlords for prioritizing the needs of the oil industry over those of longer-term residents. Second, the boom was viewed as causing a massive cultural shift in which Minot's traditional moral values were disrespected and a permissive attitude toward crime had taken hold. Residents felt that these issues were a function of the poor values of out-of-state newcomers and an increased sense of entitlement among Minot's local youth. Third, residents uniformly felt that the Bakken boom would expire sooner than the decades' long predictions made by oil and as elites, arguing that the city government needed to use existing oil revenue to modernize the city in order to prepare for the time when oil was no longer a major economic driver. Residents were particularly concerned that not enough money was being spent on education or attracting non-oil jobs, thus making it unlikely that the city's younger residents would desire to remain in Minot as adults. Thus, ultimately residents felt that while certain problems came from the oil boom, the benefits – both present and future – outweighed the drawbacks.

The major findings from this chapter are: 1.) Residents were unwilling to directly criticize the oil industry for externalities; 2.) Residents found cultural changes to be more upsetting than economic changes; and 3.) Residents believed oil could be both a short- and long-term positive for the city if wealth were directed towards modernization.

1.3 Study area

The Bakken Formation is a hydrocarbon rich shale in the Upper Great Plains that covers approximately 200,000 square miles of North Dakota, Montana, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, with potential hydrocarbons underlying a portion of South Dakota (see Figure 1 (p. 12)). The vast majority of oil and gas recoverable through fracking and horizontal drilling is contained within Western North Dakota, Eastern Montana and extreme Southern Saskatchewan (Gaswirth et al., 2013). Oil production using fracking and horizontal drilling began at the shallow Elm Coulee Field in Eastern Montana in 2000 and in the deeper, older North Dakota portion of the Bakken at the Parshall Oil Field in 2006. Oil output has increased from ~100,000 barrels/day in January 2009 to a peak of ~1,400,000 barrels/day in June 2015. Production as of December 2017 is ~1,000,000 barrels/day. For comparison, the Niobrara (Colorado and Wyoming) and Eagle Ford (Texas) plays produce ~400,000 and ~1,300,000 barrels/day, respectively, while the Permian Formation (New Mexico and Texas) – which is split between traditional oil production and shale production – produces ~2,000,000 barrels/day (United States Energy Information Administration, 2018a) (see Figure 2 (p. 15)). Fracking in the Bakken and other major plays has had a major impact on total US crude production, with production rising from ~ 5,200,000 barrels/day in January 2009 to ~9,400,000 barrels/day in December 2017 (an 80% increase), the highest level since 1972 (See Figure 3 (p. 14)).

Since approximately 1890, the surface of the Bakken has been used for dryland farming of wheat, soybeans, sunflowers and flax. Population density is low (~1,200,000 persons at 5.6 persons/square mile compared to ~330,000,000 persons at 89

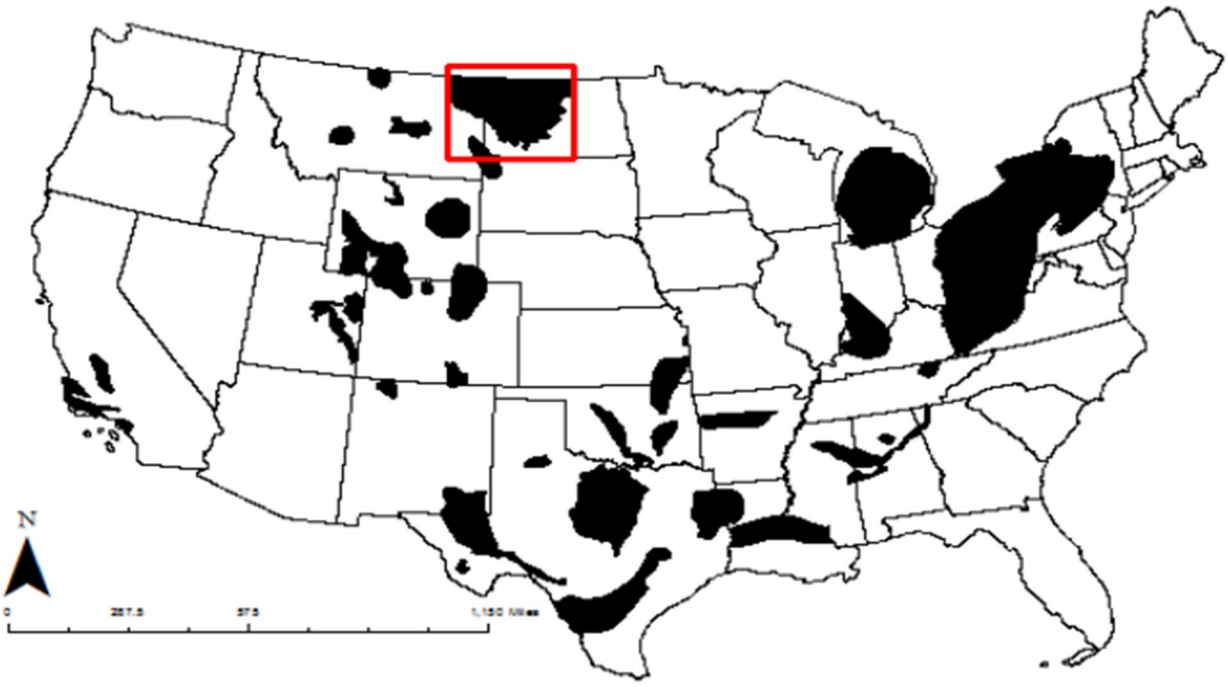

Figure 1: Major US shale plays (Bakken highlighted). Map adapted from North Dakota GIS, 2018.

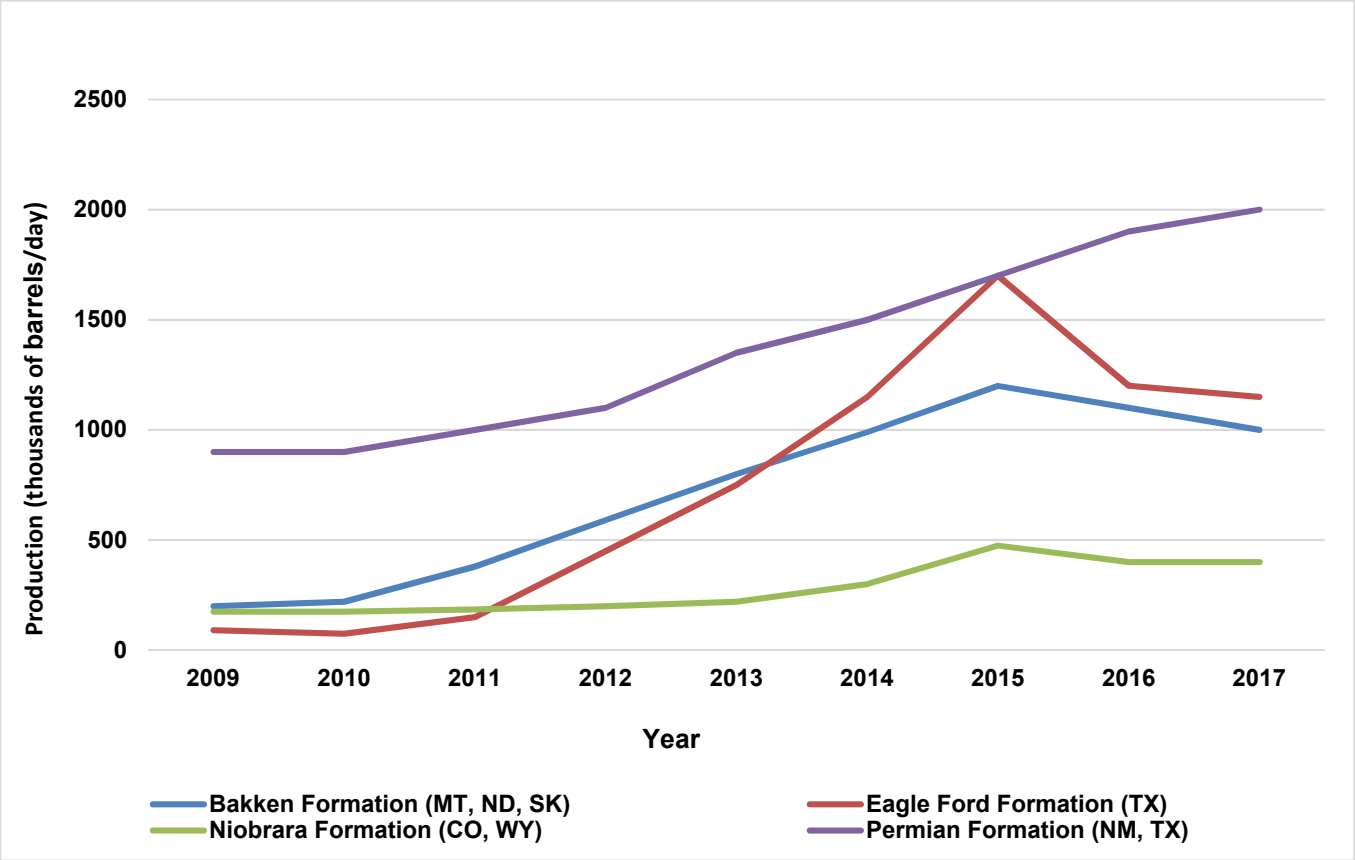

Figure 2: Crude oil production from major US shale plays, 2009 - 2017. Graph created from data contained in US Energy Information Administration, 2018b.

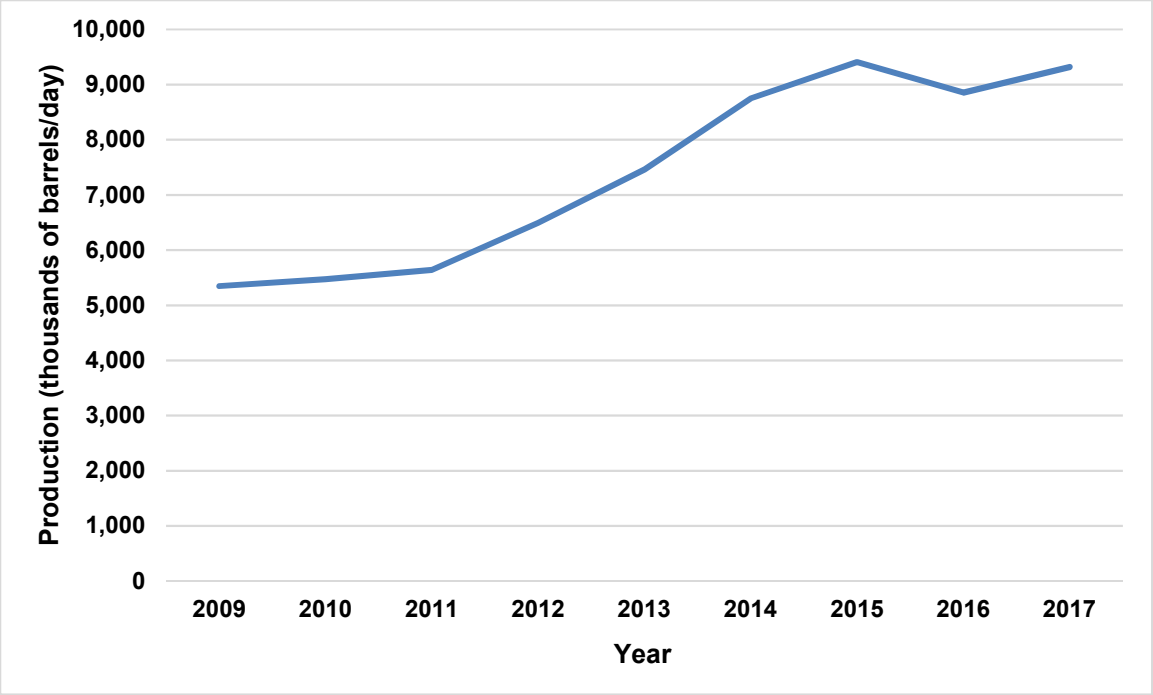

Figure 3: Total US crude oil production, 2009 – 2017. Graph created from data contained in US Energy Information Administration, 2018b.

persons/square mile for the US as a whole) (Raimi & Newell 2016). Within North Dakota, primary oil activity is centered in the northwestern portion of the state (known as the “oil patch”), which contains several protected areas including Theodore Roosevelt National Park and Little Missouri National Grassland. The National Parks Conservation Association has designated these protected areas as threatened by oil and gas development (National Parks Conservation Association, 2013). Primary cities in the region include Minot (48,743, 2016 est.), Williston (26,426, 2016 est.) and Dickinson (23,400, 2016 est.) with no other towns greater than 7,000 people (see figure 4 (p. 16)).

Minot (the study area for Chapter 6) has historically been the major retail, financial and transportation hub for the Bakken region, while also being home to a large Air Force base. This role has continued during the Bakken oil boom, as the local headquarters for many national oil and gas businesses are located in Minot. The city doubled the size of its airport between 2013 and 2017, making it the largest in the state despite Minot being only the fourth-largest city in North Dakota. Population in the region grew ~19% from 1960 - 2000 (a period of general stagnation, see Chapter 6.2), whereas the population has grown by the same rate from 2010 – 2016 alone (US Census Bureau, 2017). Rapid population growth has generated challenges to housing, infrastructure and crime and deviance (see Chapter 6).

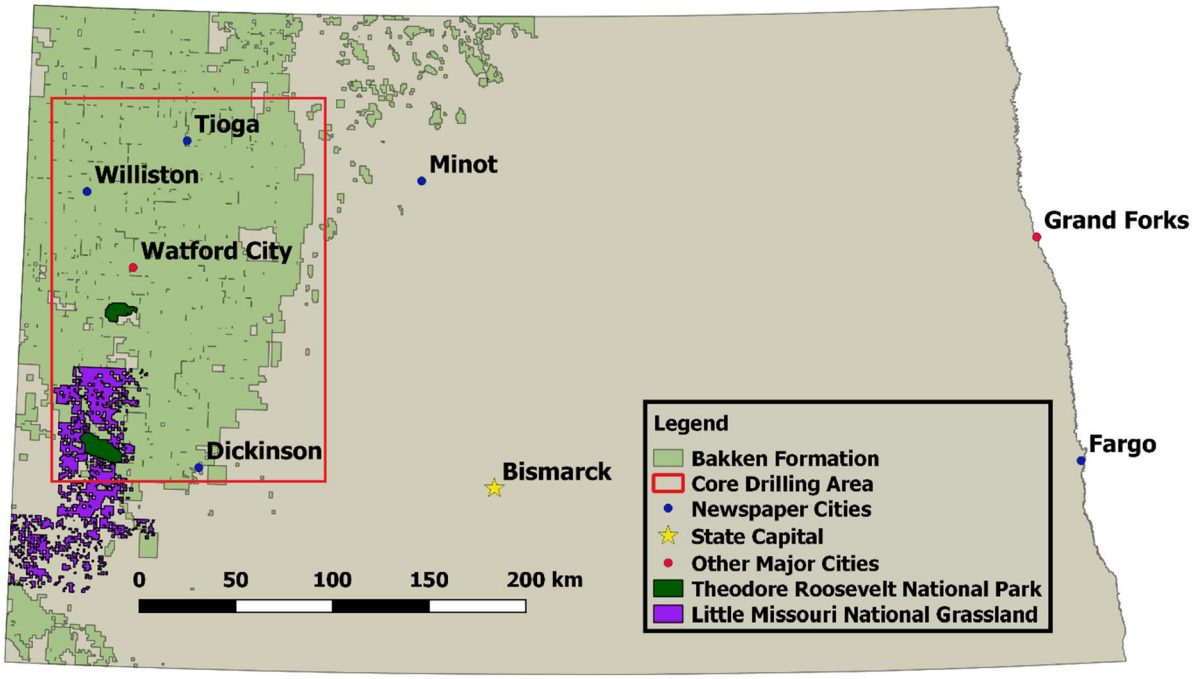

Figure 4: Key cities and environmental features in North Dakota (Bakken highlighted). Map created from data contained in North Dakota GIS, 2015.

1.4 Overall aims and preview of remaining chapters

The overall goal of this dissertation is to examine the opinions of North Dakota citizens regarding key aspects of the Bakken oil boom. The three major populations examined were oil and gas elites (Chapter 4), editorial writers in North Dakota newspapers (Chapter 5) and longer-term residents (Chapter 6). This dissertation seeks to answer three major questions related to the overall goal: 1.) Examine how elite-level policy makers created discourses surrounding fracking and how these discourses were used to advance specific political goals; 2.) interrogate how elite and ordinary actors employed these discourses in state-level print media to debate the merits of specific boom-related policies; and 3.) study how longer-term oil patch residents understand fracking and to ascertain how and to what degree these media discourses effect such understandings. Building on data from preliminary research conducted in summer 2014, this study began with the hypothesis that the lives of longer-term residents were mediated both through their daily, direct experiences with the effects of the boom as well as through formal discourses about the boom created by the policy maker group, which are then filtered down to the "ordinary" population through print media. Thus, this dissertation sought to explicitly connect findings relating to ideologies from Chapters 4 and 5 with localized realities in Minot in Chapter 6.

In addition to the substantive chapters, this dissertation also includes a review of relevant literature (Chapter 2), a chapter on research design (Chapter 3) and a conclusion and discussion (Chapter 7).

Chapter 2 examines the three major literatures which the study contributes to: 1.) Geographies of energy and natural resources; 2.) Social science studies of fracking; and 3.) Case studies of energy and extraction employing subjectivity frameworks. The major gaps in these literatures that this dissertations addresses include: lack of case studies of fossil fuels, poor integration between geopolitical analyses and local extractive case studies and the low use of subjectivity theories in case studies of fracking landscapes.

Chapter 3 examines the major research questions for the dissertation and also describes the data collection and analysis procedures for the substantive chapters. Respondent data for the chapters were collected from a combination of interviews, focus groups and participant observation, while editorials were collected from online versions of newspapers published in the state. Data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti qualitative data analysis software using a hybrid coding style borrowing from critical discourse analysis (CDA), patterned-meaning analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and Manuel Delanda's conception of assemblages (Delanda, 2006). This chapter also includes a reflection on positionality issues related to my family history in Minot and the Bakken region.

Chapter 7 summarizes the dissertation's key findings, reviews the dissertation's contributions to the existing literature and reflects on future research directions. The major overall finding from this dissertation is that oil-related economic transformations in the Bakken have relied upon social and cultural arguments, playing on specific North Dakotan themes that have placed the oil industry outside the realm of possible political contestation.

2. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This dissertation examines the political economic and cultural effects of the fracking boom in North Dakota's Bakken Shale using the insights of three major bodies of literature: 1.) Geographies of Energy and Natural Resources; 2.) Social science studies of fracking; and 3.) Environmental subjectivity in natural resource production landscapes. The strength and weaknesses of each of these literatures are reviewed in this chapter, with a focus on literatures that are most directly relevant to this dissertation. Major gaps in these literatures as a whole are: 1.) Ethnographic studies of fossil fuel production landscapes in North America are limited, especially in geography proper; 2.) With some limited exceptions, most case studies do a poor job of linking local outcomes with either dominant discourses and ideologies or larger scale economic and political realities that may condition them; and 3.) Many case studies either do not substantially engage with social theories or are rely uncritically on specific frameworks such as boomtown sociology, thus often limiting opportunities for synergies with other bodies of work. The conclusion to this review (Chapter 2.5) will address the specific ways in which the empirical analysis in the body chapters of this dissertation (Chapters 4-6) serve to remedy some of these particular weaknesses and advance this literature.

2.2 Geographies of energy and natural resources

Resource control, access and use have long been core concerns within human-environment geography. Erich Zimmerman (1951) posited that the fundamental challenge for the world in the latter half of 20th century would be balancing the ever-greater need for natural resources, especially fossil fuel energy, with the rapidly shrinking bases of these resources. A resurgence of interest in energy and resource issues occurred in the 1970s, a period dubbed "the energy decade" due to a renewed focus on population growth, unchecked economic growth and energy shortage following the 1973 oil crisis (Yergin, 1982). However, contra the Neo-Malthusian views of the time (Ehrlich & Holdren, 1971; Hardin, 1968), seminal texts such as Earl Cook's *Man, Energy, Society* (1976) and Tim O'Riordan's *Environmentalism* (1976), argued that such crises were the result not of overpopulation, but of resource maldistribution, particularly the overconsumption of imported energy by wealthy nations that robbed poorer, producer nations of the ability to develop their own economies.

As concerns about scarcity faded during the period from the 1980s to the early 2000s, so too did much of the research on natural resources, especially in an energy context. An exception is the edited volume *Geographical Dimensions of Energy* (Calzonetti & Solomon, 1985), which was one of the first attempts to summarize the scope of energy geographies as a subdiscipline, as well as to include case studies of energy landscapes. One of the major flaws of this book, though, was that it largely eschewed politics in favor of narrow technical or policy solutions to energy problems. Geographers such as Emel and Peet (1989) and Wescoat (1991, 1992, 1993) argued that an explicitly

political approach linking global processes to place-specific outcomes, such as the nascent political ecology, was needed in order to respond to increasingly global problems such as climate change, geopolitical restructuring (i.e., breakup of the Soviet Union) and the role of resources in violent conflict. Wescoat specifically argued that a greater focus on case study approaches, especially of extractive industries, was needed to address questions of social justice that were largely ignored in apolitical and/or policy-oriented studies.

Although many political ecology-influenced case studies on local resource conflicts and use were conducted during the 1990s and early 2000s, the research largely focused on struggles related to subsistence resources such as water, food and firewood and their connection to extraterritorial economic processes (see Bridge (2002) for a critique of this approach), with specific research on energy largely non-existent.[1] Indeed, it is only recently that geographers have studied resources as important subjects beyond their entanglement in broader economic and environmental debates (Bakker & Bridge, 2006). For example, Bridge (2009) argues for place-specific approaches that examine how resources come to be incorporated within social and cultural systems, furthering arguing in a later paper (Bridge, 2011) that energy-related case studies are particularly important in light of renewed concerns over energy shortage and climate change during the Anthropocene era.

[1] Some exceptions can be found in the work on local manifestations of the resource curse by Auty (1995, 2001). This work, however, largely does not examine resources as energy.

Yet most recent research within resource geography has focused on global geopolitics and policy. A major topic, building on the Anthropocene theme, has been the so-called carbon economy, or the economic policies around carbon emissions, especially those concerned with reducing emissions to combat climate change. Although geographers have pointed out the potential benefits of decarbonization, most research on this theme has emphasized how such mechanisms are used to support "business as usual" energy and economic agendas in industrialized nations. Bumpus and Liverman (2008) and Knox-Hayes (Knox-Hayes, 2010; Bansal & Knox-Hayes 2013) have argued that carbon offsets (i.e. the capture of carbon in one place to mitigate its emission in another) allow wealthy nations to create a "spatial fix" in which they continue to pursue carbon-intensive lifestyles while encouraging offsets in developing countries, potentially stifling development. Critiques of decarbonization narratives have been extended to the oil and gas sector, with critics demonstrating how theories of peak oil and climate change (historically championed by the environmental left) have been co-opted by right-wing governments in order to push authoritarian, anti-environmental policies under the notion of there being no meaningful sustainable alternative pathways (Bettini & Karaliotas, 2013; Barr & Pollard, 2017). However, a more optimistic view of decarbonization is advanced by Bridge, et al. (2014) who in their analysis of the UK government's transition policy argue for the emergence of multiple, potentially positive, futures for a low-carbon economy. Thus, despite the disparate nature of this globally focused scholarship, the major theme uniting it is that resource policy is determined in discursive arenas that are increasingly spatially and politically distant from sites of production, distribution and use,

the implication being that there is little room for direct contestation on the part of people living in those landscapes.

Other geopolitical approaches have examined the relationship of oil and other mineral resources to the global political order, specifically as it relates to political outcomes. Smil (2011) and Huber (2013) demonstrated the complete embeddedness of oil within American ways of life and the political discourses that have continued to keep the United States both embroiled in global military conflicts and lagging behind their European and Asian peer nations in renewable and energy-efficient technologies. Huber specifically argued that such conflict and inefficiency are fundamental to American ideologies of individuality and prosperity, which emphasize consumption (particularly of automobiles and other high-energy machines) and consumer choice (no matter how costly this may prove to the environment, the overall economy or the rights of others) as the bedrock of American-style freedom. Therefore, according to Huber, Americans believe they are entitled to the “cheap energy” that underpins their lifestyles, thus providing political justification for the continued exploitation of labor, environmental destruction and perpetual foreign military entanglements that are seen as maintaining the energy status quo.

In the broader international sphere, Watts (2005) and Bridge (2008) showed that the particular organization of the oil industry (international transnational corporations in partnership with state-run oil companies in nations with autocratic governments) leads to conditions of chronic underdevelopment in third world exporter nations and the persistence of technological and fiscal inefficiencies in wealthier receiver nations. Similarly, Philippe Le Billon demonstrated (Andrews et al., 2017; Le Billon & Cervantes,

2009) that extractive resources are not only the catalyst for corruption, violence and human rights abuses in poor countries, but that the political restructuring of these sectors during post-conflict recovery periods deepens the divide between political elites and the poor.

However, the geopolitical studies rarely use ethnographic case studies. Therefore, such case studies are largely bifurcated between two major areas: non-energy extractive landscapes and renewable energy production landscapes, thus leaving a major research gap for place-based studies on fossil fuels. On the non-energy side, a critical literature has emerged around the integration of new, non-extractive economic activities within former or diminished extractive landscapes. Research on indigenous mining (LeClerc & Keeling, 2015; Cameron, 2015; Schlosser, 2013) and fishing (Silver, 2014) landscapes in the US and Canada has demonstrated how the enrollment of “wastelands” within the broader economy has violated local residents’ deeply held traditions of community cohesion, common property and local knowledge. In a non-indigenous context, recent research in Newfoundland by Mather (Mather, 2013; Foley, Mather & Neis, 2015) has argued that the switch from relatively unregulated wild fishing to “scientifically” managed fishing and aquaculture has significantly damaged traditional fishers who have neither the capital nor technical knowledge to compete against agribusiness. Finally, scholars such as Liesch (2014) and Hein and Funyufunyu (2014) have shown that attempts to preserve industrial heritage sites as monuments for the descendants of former extractive workers have little resonance among their target populations because residents are unable to conceive of such spaces outside of the logics of growth and accumulation. In summary, the cross-cutting thread in this literature is that the re-invigoration of “unproductive”

landscapes is as much about changing the cultural logics of local populations as it is about merely introducing new economic infrastructure.

Renewable energy case studies have largely focused on the struggles between groups implementing energy projects (who frequently come from outside of the community) and local populations that may be skeptical of them. Recent studies on biofuels have concluded that large-scale enabling discourses about climate change, green energy and development do not adequately address the struggles inherent in on-the-ground production, leading to a scalar mismatch between global and national perceptions and local realities (Gillon, 2010; Kedron & Bagchi-Sen, 2011; Baka, 2017). Studies on topics as varied as wind energy (Brannstrom, Jepson, & Persons, 2011; Pasqualetti, 2011; Devine-Wright, 2009), agricultural and forest resources (Newberry, 2014; Taylor et al., 2011) and hydroelectricity (Dusyk, 2011; Armstrong & Bulkeley, 2014) have demonstrated that support or opposition to local energy production is rooted in specific cultural values and place-based experiences, rather than a lack of understanding about the need for sustainable development or simple opposition to any development within one's own community (referred to as "not in my backyard" or NIMBY). Indeed, in a recent study that serves to summarize these themes, Fast et al. (2016) have argued that community members base their support of renewable energy projects on four key variables, none of which relate directly to sustainability or proximity to development: 1.) health and wellbeing; 2.) equitable distribution of financial benefits; 3.) meaningful engagement with project managers and stakeholders; and 4.) stakeholders understanding and appreciation of landscape concerns. Thus, support or opposition to new technologies is far more complex than narrow political or economic concerns, but is

strongly tied to notions of place that stakeholders may perceive as being violated by outside developers.

This strong work being done to situate renewable energy within broader economic and political contexts, relatively few scholars similarly link local and global processes to fossil fuels. Ethnographic studies of fossil fuel energy consumption, which have focused on energy consumption at the scales of the household (Cupples, 2011; Harrison & Popke, 2011; Petrova et al., 2013), community (Llewellyn et al., 2017; A. Smith et al., 2016) and state (Kuby et al., 2011; Walker et al., 2016), tend to be either too locality-centric or fall into the oft-lamented trap of labeling local outcomes as manifestations of global neoliberal processes (Bridge, 2002; Bakker, 2010; Brenner, Peck, & Theodore, 2010). However, recent studies on electricity provision in Europe (Colell & Neumann-Cosel, 2016; Bouzarovski & Herrero, 2016) demonstrate how local energy outcomes, both positive and negative, can be directly traced to specific policies implemented by governments at the continental, state and local levels.

Outside of the nascent body of case studies of fracking landscapes (to be explored in detail in 2.3), fossil fuel production case studies in geography have been limited in number. As with non-fossil fuel extractive studies, this research is also bifurcated between two major approaches: a more traditional approach examining community level effects on labor and economic development, largely in wealthy countries, and a more theory-oriented approach (known as post-neoliberalism/neo-extractivism) that explores the relationship between global political trends and local outcomes in extractive communities in the developing world. For the former approach, a small number of case studies examine the impacts that economic restructuring in former coal mining regions in China (Hu &

Hassink, 2017) and Appalachia (Woods & Gordon, 2011; Douglas & Walker, 2017) has had on areas such as employment, economic growth and quality of life. Work on traditional oil production landscapes has been similarly sparse, with only a few notable examples such as the effects of pipeline construction on indigenous wellbeing in Russia (Dallmann, et al., 2011; Yakovleva, 2011) and the long-term effects of oil and gas production on a coastal community in Nigeria (Bayode, Adewunmi, & Odunwole, 2011). However, an emerging set of authors have begun examining knowledge practices among various workers associated with the oil industry and how they rationalize their role in perpetuating exploitation of petroleum in light of the effects these have on topics as varied as the climate crisis (Asdal, 2014), the wellbeing of their friends and neighbors (J.M. Smith & Smith, 2018) and the broader destabilization of the labor movement (Ince et al., 2015). Indeed, such questions about the role of official knowledge and its connection to policy outcomes is specifically relevant for Chapter 4's analysis of the role of oil industry discourse in selling fracking to North Dakota citizens.

The second approach to conventional fossil fuels has focused on the growth of post-neoliberalism and neo-extractivism. Neo-extractivism supports the deliberate exploitation of domestic resource bases in order to avoid the pitfalls of an unstable global economy biased against developing countries and is particularly associated with Latin American mineral development (Yates & Bakker, 2014; Ruckert, Macdonald & Proulx, 2017; Bebbington & Bebbington, 2011). Geographers have applied this frame to oil and gas in South America, seeking to show how neo-extractivism is simultaneously an authoritarian, state-run strategy being used to prop up resurgent left-wing nationalism, but also a vehicle through which both extractive workers and anti-petroleum protesters

voice their grievances against these very same development narratives (Kaup, 2010; Kohl & Farthing, 2012; Valdivia, 2015; Pellegrini & Arismendi, 2012). These multi-faceted layers of the neo-extractive paradigm provide a new way forward for geographers seeking to describe the relationship between the state, business elites and the ordinary population in co-producing the extractive economy.

In summary, research in geographies of resources and energy provides multiple ways to address the connections between resource extraction at the community level and larger-scale economic processes. However, each of these sets of literatures has their strengths and weaknesses. Geopolitical research on energy has provided a conceptual model for examining how the interactions of various elite actors and the policies they put in place affect political outcomes across vast physical (and conceptual spaces) and among territories with diverse political systems and institutional capacities. Yet one of the major problems with these approaches is that they rarely seek to test the veracity of these findings using ethnographic case studies that would help to elucidate how policy implementation differs across spaces, places and cultures. A model for examining fracking landscapes is provided by existing research in renewable energies and certain studies on fossil fuel productive and consumptive landscapes. However, one of the major pitfalls of these two bodies of literature is that they often fail to link local outcomes to extra-territorial concerns, or do not convincingly demonstrate how local and global processes interact and are modified across spaces and scales. These linkages have been better addressed by two other bodies of literature on non-energy extractive landscapes and studies of post-neoliberalism in Latin America, both of which pay close attention to the ways in which political and policy interventions produce specific outcomes at the

community and individual levels. However, as neither of these literatures has yet addressed hydraulic fracturing, and with the latter body of literature being largely divorced from the political and cultural milieu of first world resource extraction, it is clear that applying these approaches to hydraulic fracturing in the Bakken will require a synthesis with the positive aspects of the literatures on global geopolitics and case studies of non-fracking energy landscapes.

2.3 Social science studies of fracking

Hydraulic fracturing has become an increasingly important research topic in both the natural and social sciences. Indeed, for the years 2010-2018, Web of Science indicates that there were over 33,000 published papers that mentioned "hydraulic fracturing" in either their titles, abstracts or keywords, with over 6,800 of these falling under the social science category.[2] However, geographically this coverage has been highly uneven with American shale plays such as the Marcellus (PA/NY) and Barnett (TX) each being mentioned in more than 900 total papers and more than 200 social science papers, whereas the Bakken has been mentioned in only 324 papers, with 86 of these under the social science heading. The Bakken has even received less attention than the UK shale deposits, despite the fact that no commercial production has occurred as of March 2018 (see Table 2 (p.30) for a complete list of statistics). Themes have developed regarding the growth of fracking as a phenomenon and its potential effects on the

[2] A cursory examination of results under the social science category demonstrates that many articles are largely not social-science-based, thus for all searches of hydraulic fracturing and social science, the total is likely to be significantly smaller.

Academic Articles on Shale, 2010-2018		
Shale Play	**No. of Articles**	**No. of Social Science Articles**
Bakken (MT, ND)	324	86
Barnett (TX)	930	274
Eagle Ford (TX)	261	70
Marcellus (NY, PA, OH)	1,206	445
Netherlands	52	20
Niobrara (CO, WY)	294	95
UK	474	142

Table 2: Academic Articles on Shale

economy and environment. This section will briefly review the major strands within the fracking literature, concentrating chiefly on social science applications, followed by an examination of specific social science studies on the Bakken. This section will then conclude by reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the social science literature.

The vast majority of this literature is either in the fields of petroleum geology, engineering and environmental sciences. Within this latter field, fierce debates have raged over the safety of hydraulic fracturing for both people and the environment. Among the most prominent topics in this field have been concerns over water contamination, air quality and the seismic implications of fracking wastewater injection. Although a complete review of this literature is beyond the scope of this chapter, several key findings from highly-cited papers in the field help to condition many of the points of entry for social scientists studying fracking. In the former category, the team led by Avner Vengosh (Osborn et al., 2011; Jackson et al., 2013; Harkness et al., 2017) has been the most prominent academic and public source of knowledge (being featured frequently in the press and in several television features on fracking). The Vengosh group finds that wells located nearer to fracking pad sites are at greater risk for methane contamination. The group argues, though, that such contamination cannot be directly linked to the fracking process, with accidental spills of wastewater being the most likely culprit. On the air quality question several prominent scientific groups have sought to discover whether fracking is disproportionately responsible for emissions. Of particular significance are studies by the group led by Anthony Ingraffea (Howarth, Santoro, & Ingraffea, 2011; Caulton, et al., 2014; Howarth, Ingraffea, & Engelder, 2011), which have argued that natural gas produced via fracking may have far worse long-term climatic impacts than either coal or

traditional oil and gas due to a significantly greater methane releases. As far as the connection between fracking wastewater disposal and earthquakes, several scholars looking largely at disposal sites in Oklahoma have independently found that wastewater disposal, in combination with this region's high existing seismic activity, create large-scale seismic activity arising in parallel with the growth of fracking and disposal (Ellsworth, 2013; Keranen, et al., 2014; McGarr, et al., 2015).

While much social scientific research examines fracking within the context of broader environmental problems facing populations, the connections to the above-mentioned natural science studies can be seen in the various issues social scientists have focused on in studying fracking. As was the case with literatures on the geographies of resources and energy (see Chapter 3.2), social science research on fracking has been divided between: 1.) studies on policy, politics and discourses related to fracking and its place in the broader political economic landscape; and 2.) place-based studies that focus on the effects of fracking-related development on the well-being of local residents. Despite this obvious divergence in focus and approach, there are many connections that can be drawn between these two groups of research, particularly in their attempts to understand how people come to understand fracking and how their feelings about it develop over repeated experiences.

Policy and political studies are divided into two major camps: 1.) studies examining how fracking policies and laws have been enacted; and 2.) studies analyzing how discourses impact public opinion. In the former group, much of this work has been focused on the discontinuities between fracking-related laws at the federal, state and municipal levels. In studies analyzing how various states have amended their laws in response to

increased fracking and related externalities, Barry Rabe (Rabe & Borick, 2013; Rabe & Hampton, 2016) has argued that the majority of state laws have prioritized the expansion of fracking at the expense of the environment. As many of these states are conservative, low-tax and spending-averse, attempts to deal with environmental and social externalities are dealt with only after mitigation funds can be raised through oil and gas-related taxes. This pattern of fracking first, environment second has also been found at the local levels by scholars working in areas such as British Columbia (Stephenson, Doukas, & Shaw, 2015), the Barnett Shale in Texas (Fry, 2013) and Colorado (J.J. Cook, 2015), all of whom have described powerful actors connected to either the oil and gas industry, various branches of government, or both, being able to dominate the decision-making process due to their stronger relationships with policy-responsible elected officials and bureaucrats. However, noted exception to these rules can be found in studies on the negotiations over strict setback distances in Dallas, TX (Fry, Brannstrom, & Murphy, 2015), the fracking ban in New York (Dodge & Lee, 2017) and environmentally-focused rule-making in the Netherlands (Metze, 2017), all of which found that cultures of greater participation by the public, which largely took an anti-fracking stance, ultimately swayed lawmakers to adopt policies generally opposed by the industry.

Given these major controversies between oil and gas laws across scales and spaces, scholars have also undertaken comparative studies examining the discontinuities and controversies that such differences have created. J.J. Cook's studies comparing policies among Wyoming, Colorado, Ohio, New York and Louisiana (J.J. Cook, 2014; Rinfret, Cook, & Pautz, 2014) have found that regardless of political character, states where independent public service regulators have greater influence over rules

propagation have less stringent and less environmentally-minded fracking policies, whereas states with stronger participation from governors and state legislatures tend to adopt rules designed to protect the environment. Similar studies looking at the provinces of Canada (Carter & Eaton, 2016; Carter, Fraser, & Zalik, 2017) and the differing fates of post-socialist Poland and Bulgaria (Goldthau & Labelle, 2016) have argued that the marshalling of strong pro-extractive narratives has allowed for the growth of hydraulic fracturing and the withering of environmental protection, regardless of which government bodies or regulators have the greatest amount of power, with the opposite being true in states with weak narratives or strong anti-fracking activism. All of these conflicts over values and regulatory authority have led scholars in the field of energy federalism to argue that effective, harmonious regulation of fracking is impossible, due to the existence of overlapping, often contradictory, laws and rules that create a complicated legal and operational environment for government, industry and activists alike (Rabe, 2014; Warner & Shapiro, 2014; Davis, 2014).

While policy studies have examined the views and roles of various governance actors, media analysis and public opinion studies have examined what non-involved individuals and groups think about fracking and how they discuss it in public forums. Media analysis, focused chiefly on newspapers, demonstrates which actors (elite and general public) dominate and control debates and how specific discourses come to dominate. Research from national-level newspaper and public relations campaigns in the US and European context has found that debates are dominated by media and political elites, with these actors seeking not to impart scientific knowledge about fracking, but instead reporting facts selectively and emphasizing specific ideas so as to conform to the

anticipated political views of their intended audiences (Mazur, 2016; Olive, 2016; Jaspal & Nerlich, 2014; Jaspal, Nerlich, & Lemancyzk, 2014). Research examining local newspaper in extractive zones, almost exclusively in the US context, has found that states that are both more politically liberal overall and in which local governments have stronger regulatory authority tend to have more critical coverage of fracking, as well as greater participation in public debates about the subject (Arnold & Holahan, 2014; Blair, et al., 2015; M.F. Smith & Ferguson, 2013). Additionally, in these states fracking is framed as a more holistic sociocultural, economic and environmental issue, whereas in conservative, centralized states it is viewed almost exclusively in economic terms (Ashmoore, et al., 2016). Indeed, despite the varied nature of participation in the fracking coverage landscape, the major finding from this body of research is that elites play a major role in shaping discourses and attempting to influence public opinion, a major factor in our next body of literature, a factor which is explored in detail in Chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation, and to a lesser degree in Chapter 6.

Public opinion research on fracking has been divided between those reliant national or regional polling and those that seek to gauge support/opposition at the local level using targeted surveys, often, though not always, supplemented by some follow-up interviews with respondents. Among these larger-scale studies, the most prominent results have come from a national telephone survey (n=1,061) conducted by a research group led by Christopher Clarke (Boudet, et al., 2014; Clarke, Hart, & Schuldt, et al., 2015; Clarke, Bugden, & Hart, et al., 2016). These studies find that support for fracking is strongly correlated with proximity to active extraction, exposure to media about the subject, gender, education and political views. Additionally, this survey found that

residents were more likely to support fracking when it was referred to as “unconventional oil and gas development” rather than “fracking”, a word to which many respondents had a negative reaction. Similar findings were found by Davis and Fisk (2014) in their analysis of a University of Texas survey (n=2,400), with the additional finding that those who viewed fracking primarily as an environmental issue were among the strongest opponents, whereas those that viewed it largely as an economic issue were strong supporters, thus mirroring findings from above-mentioned newspaper studies.

Localized opinion studies, however, have been slightly more nuanced, attempting to gauge support or opposition to specific aspects of fracking development, rather than the concept as a whole or in the abstract. These studies have been largely situated within the boomtown framework popular in rural sociology and environmental psychology, which seeks to measure social disruption due to economic boom activities, with close attention paid to the effects of crime and disorder and the weakening of social ties on local residents’ wellbeing (Freudenberg, 1981, 1986; England and Albrecht, 1984). Gene Theodori has conducted a series of surveys on local residents’ opinions of fracking in the Barnett, Eagle Ford and Marcellus Shales of Texas and Pennsylvania, examining issues as diverse as general awareness of fracking, understanding about fracking and water use and residents’ likelihood to engage in opposition to fracking (Theodori, 2012, 2013; Willits, Theodori, & Luloff, 2016; Theodori & Ellis, 2017). The majority of his findings have mirrored those from national surveys, however, these studies have also most significantly discovered that those living in areas with a longer history of oil and gas tend to be both more educated about oil and gas technologies, as well as being more strongly opposed

to the industry than those living in newer fracking areas, who are more likely to support the industry due to optimism over the potential for economic growth.

Another prolific contributor to this literature has been Jeffrey Jacquet, whose research has been focused in the Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania and New York (Brasier, et al., 2011; Jacquet, 2012; Jacquet & Stedman, 2013). In addition to many of the standard findings, Jacquet has also sought to broaden the discourse by focusing on specific stakeholder groups in the fracking debate, including landowners and public officials. In particular, Jacquet has been one of the few scholars who has sought to examine fracking within the broader context of energy transitions, specifically examining the conflicts between wind energy and fracking in Western Pennsylvania, and the markedly different reactions stakeholders have had to each phenomenon. Also, Jacquet has sought to supplement his survey work with a broad array of ethnographic studies in the same areas in which surveys were conducted, thus providing specific context to his discoveries. It is this attempt to connect these discursive issues to on-the-ground occurrences that brings us to our next body of literature: ethnographic case studies of fracking.

While existing localized surveys have provided a broad overview of individuals' feelings about fracking and have moved beyond the simple support/denial framework of national studies, they have often done a poor job of integrating local cultural factors into their work and have often not sought to engage with social theories outside of the boomtown framework. Additionally, overreliance on large-n survey design has often proved an inherently limiting method of inquiry, as there is not much opportunity for respondents to explain their beliefs or to discuss topics outside of the survey's

parameters. For example, Theodori's (2013) study which sought to divine opposition to fracking solely in terms of "civic actions" such as writing letters to local officials. Attempts to remedy these issues have been made by ethnographic studies of fracking communities, with the studies also being divided along two major axes: 1.) studies concerned with activism; and 2.) studies concerned with the impacts of fracking on people and the environment. Within the activism frame, many scholars have sought to determine how and why citizens become members of the movement (or in notable cases, a counter-movement). Several scholars have sought to demonstrate how individuals become fracking opponents through participation in citizen science, the enlistment of amateurs in the collection of scientific data often as a tool for education and public engagement, but increasingly for activist purposes (Ottinger, 2010). These citizen science studies, then, provide a direct link between professional scientific environmental monitoring mentioned above and place-based studies of extraction. Research by Abby Kinchy (Kinchy, Jalbert and Lyons, 2014; Jalbert, Kinchy, & Perry, 2014; Kinchy 2017) on participatory water monitoring in the Marcellus Shale has found that the decades long tradition of citizens gathering data for other activist causes has allowed for an easy transition to doing to so for fracking, given the existence of a trained motivated body of volunteers. However, they have argued that the divergent organizational character and objectives of various water monitoring organizations has led to a disorganized landscape that has had trouble convincing skeptical policy makers of the purportedly actionable results of their findings. Similarly, case studies of attempts at collaborative socioeconomic monitoring of the effects of natural gas development in Wyoming have found that while citizen participation in "adaptive management" was initially welcomed by federal and local regulators, political

disagreements between citizen groups, as well a shift in the preference of regulators for rapid permitting expansion to facilitate revenue, ultimately caused the groups' efforts to be fruitless (Benson, 2009; Haggerty & McBride, 2016). On a more positive note, Zilliox and Smith (2018) have found that the demonization of citizen scientists by regulators and unfriendly politicians contributed to a raised level of consciousness that allowed for anti-fracking political candidates to gain ground. This is perhaps the only example from this literature of citizen science having a distinct impact on fracking governance.

While citizen science studies have shown how many residents initially become interested in activism, all of the above authors carefully note that many organizations and participants often seek to frame themselves as apolitical or interested solely in mitigating instances of negative externalities, rather than opposing fracking and related development itself. Filling this gap are the many studies of the growth of anti-fracking movements in affected areas. Several studies focus on the existence and politicization of landowner coalitions, especially those in the Marcellus and Utica Shales. Dokshin (2016) and Walsh, Bird, & Heintzelman (2015) have found that New York-based landowner coalitions, which have historically pursued conservative, pro-development goals, were motivated to become public fracking supporters due to the perception that urban liberals were attempting to block fracking in order to ruin rural livelihoods. Conversely, Simonelli (2014) and Jacquet and Stedman (2011) have argued that many conservative landowners who have historically been skeptical of liberalism or environmentalism have joined forces with more liberal groups due to concerns that allowing fracking would ruin their ability to productively exercise their property rights.

While there are many studies outside the landowner frame, one of the most comprehensive is Adam Briggle's *A Field Philosopher's Guide to Fracking* (2015). Briggle traces his and others' evolution from knowing nearly nothing about fracking to eventually spearheading the eventually overturned ban on fracking in Denton, Texas (Barnett Shale). Along the way, Briggle begins to realize the broader connections between his anti-fracking activism and broader struggles against neoliberalism. Further studies from Australia (Mercer, de Rijke, & Dressler, 2014) and Wisconsin (Pearson, 2013) have shown a similar trajectory, finding that many groups that begin as hodgepodge coalitions of strange political bedfellows often connect themselves to other activist groups and make themselves more politically relevant by purposely framing themselves as part of larger environmental or anti-neoliberal movements.

Yet while activist studies shed powerful light on how politics and identity interact to form supportive or oppositional subjectivities, they do not focus on the majority of residents who do not become politically involved. This often leads to a shallow investigation of cultural and economic factors by reducing fracking-related struggles to narrow struggles over property rights and environmentalism, the latter of which many rural residents often regard with suspicion (Haggerty, 2007). Addressing this "forgotten" population are a host of studies examining the effects of fracking and development on individual residents in boomtowns, of which we will review several that are most useful to this dissertation.

The first major approach has been to study regulators, political figures and economic elites and their role in the local governance of fracking. Studies of this kind from largely rural areas including Texas' Eagle Ford Shale (Ellis, et al., 2017; Murphy, et al.,

2018), the Marcellus Shale (Schafft, et al., 2014), Louisiana's Haynesville Shale (Ladd, 2013) and the New Albany Shale in Illinois and Kentucky (Silva & Crowe, 2015) have found that while fracking is often viewed as a major pathway for development, rural elites are frustrated by the inability to make impactful regulatory decisions about the process and by externalities that force them to expend more of their already over-stretched budgets and service resources. Schafft et al. (2014) argue that these common concerns across shale plays can be described as "decision making dilemmas" that "occur in the context of incomplete information and rapid, unpredictable community change involving the emergence of both new opportunities and new insecurities" (p. 389). Indeed, Ellis et al. (2017) have demonstrated mostly politically conservative elites in rural areas are in a tremendous bind in that they often personally want to slow or stop development, yet cannot publicly do so due to the political consequences. Such ambivalent feelings can be seen in the responses included in Chapter 6, in which many avowedly conservative respondents argue that they preferred the social landscape of the pre-boom days, yet feel conflicted about having such attitudes due to their divergence from the acceptable pro-growth culture of the Bakken.

A second major theme in these case studies has been how individuals cope with the physical and emotional trauma caused by fracking boomtown disruption. Studies from the Marcellus Shale, the UK and Alberta have sought to examine topics as varied as bullying (Perry, 2012), the potential relationship between fracking chemicals and poor health outcomes (Finewood & Stroup, 2012; Davidson, 2017; McHenry, 2017) and the ways in which fracking is viewed as yet another form of dispossession and disempowerment in depressed, former coal-mining (Hudgins, 2013; Malin, 2014; Short &

Szolucha, 2017) and agricultural (Wright, Muma, & Radebaugh, 2016) regions. Among the major advances in these studies over existing ethnographic studies is examination of fracking from the perspective of people without significant ties to the oil and gas apparatus either as employees, regulators or economically-involved local officials and elites. Much of this work has focused on marginalized groups that are often neglected in qualitative fieldwork more generally, such as women, the elderly and those living in poverty. McHenry's (2017) study of explicitly-identified working class mothers in the Marcellus Shale and Wright, Muma and Radebaugh's (2016) study of nursing home residents in a Kansas farming community representing particularly novel approaches to the ethnography of fracking landscapes. These latter two approaches are of particular relevance to this dissertation as the majority of respondents were elderly and a sizable minority were of modest economic means.

Finally, a small body of work has begun to look at the relationship between fracking and agricultural landscapes. In addition to the above-mentioned Kansas study (Wright, Muma, & Radebaugh, 2016), studies on the risks that fracking poses to agriculture have been conducted in the Marcellus (Perry, 2011; Poulsen, et al., 2018) and Australia (de Rijke, 2013) finding that hydraulic fracturing poses both benefits (in the form of potential revenue from royalties and increased local investment by developers) as well as risks (fears of contamination, rising costs and competition for land use and transportation resources) for agricultural stakeholders and community members. These findings are of particular salience to this dissertation as agriculture is the largest sector of the Bakken economy and is identified by both elite and non-elite respondents as needing protection from economic and environmental challenges posed by fracking.

While adequately summarizing the entire breadth of each of these bodies that make up the collective literature on social science studies of fracking cannot be done in a single chapter, several major themes, as well as benefits and drawbacks can be identified. First, literature examining fracking discourses, policy and opinion does an excellent job of identifying the broad swath of issues and emotions that animate and condition discussions and political actions taken regarding fracking at various scales and spaces. These studies also help to connect fracking to broader debates regarding global geopolitics, the environment and economic development in the contemporary neoliberalized landscape. However, this broad span is also a major weakness of these studies, which often simplify issues that are often complex and varying across different cultural landscapes. Moreover, these studies also have a bias toward national scales and often make little distinction between the opinions of those living in extractive zones and those outside of them. Place-based studies do much to address these specific shortcomings of non-ethnographic studies, painting rich pictures of the diverse landscapes and cultural milieus in which fracking is occurring, as well as helping to contextualize fracking within local development pathways. However, this place specificity also tends toward a rather myopic focus on the local impacts of fracking and often does not satisfactorily connect these local outcomes to broader economic and political shifts, many of which are explicitly identified in the aforementioned discursive studies. Similarly, despite a few notable exceptions, the overreliance on the boomtown sociology framework leads to a lack of engagement with literatures on subjectivity (see 2.4), as well as with social theory more generally. Additionally, despite the existence of an emerging body of strong case studies of non-politicized fracking communities, there is a significant bias in

the overall literature toward the activist frame. Activist residents almost certainly do not comprise the majority of residents living in shale landscapes and in more conservative regions such as the Bakken activism is a negligible part of the overall social landscape.

Although rectifying all of these issues in a single dissertation is not feasible, this dissertation addresses these notable gaps in several ways. First, it situates the Bakken within the broader political situation in which fracking occurs, paying specific attention to the ways in which discourses seek to appeal to national and global concerns (Chapter 4). Second, it critically examines how discourses are used, challenged and modified by a broad swath of stakeholders beyond elites (Chapter 5). Finally, it will seek to connect the issues from Chapters 4 and 5 in Chapter 6, which examines the opinions of non-activist residents in Minot, a Bakken boomtown at the crossroads of the agriculture and energy industries.

2.4 Environmental subjectivities and natural resources

Notions of how people come to view themselves, their surroundings, and their endeavors have long been key concerns within environmental social science. Traditional studies based in community sociology have historically focused on decline in community cohesion and social ties in “disrupted” communities due to residents’ confusion about whom to trust in unfamiliar social landscapes (Erikson, 1976; Jobes, 1987). However, more recent theories of the subject under globalization have demonstrated that subjectivity, rather than being a stable object changing only under specific stresses, is often a complex process in which identities are constantly re-worked and re-negotiated

due to rapid technological and social changes taking place in far more precarious work and life milieus (Cuppini, Frapporti and Pirone, 2015; Williamson, 2012). In response to this changing reality, scholars have drawn on the work of subjectivity theorists such as Foucault, Butler and Althusser to build new ways to examine “environmental subjects” in an era of increasingly contentious environmental politics centered on issues such as large-scale land grabbing and climate change (Aldrich, 2012; Borras, et al., 2011). Building specifically on the work of Foucault, Luke (1995) and Agrawal (2005) have argued that subject positions are produced through encounters with the environment mediated by “technologies of government” that constrain the acceptable choices and behaviors toward said environments in favor of outcomes that benefit elite agendas. However, as a counterpoint to this top-down “environmentality” narrative, researchers such as Robbins (2007) and Cepek (2011) have posited that changes in individual subjectivities (and the resulting environmental outcomes) are part of a complex and intertwined relationship between political economic processes, place-based cultural atmospheres and the landscape itself. Despite these competing outcomes, the main thrust of such subjectivity-centric approaches has been to show that specific experience with the environment, rather than solely exposure to ideology, plays a major role in determining individual and collective subjectivities in changing landscapes.

Scholarship on environmental subjectivity related to natural resources has largely been split between two major areas of inquiry: 1.) livelihood struggles in the developing world related to economic restructuring around new forms of resource production; and 2.) studies of attitudes toward risk and benefits of production landscapes in the developed world. Indeed, many of the struggles in the former category are especially contentious

due to being part-and-parcel of larger issues related to subsistence, traditional ways of life and marginalization. Scholars working on renewable energy production in developing countries have consistently shown that target populations are often forced to reconcile newer Western methods of environmental management with traditional frameworks, thus creating identity conflicts.

Such contradictions have been particularly acute in post-neoliberal environments, in which nationalist governments have sought to demarcate appropriate forms of behavior for citizens in relation to resource and energy production projects, which are increasingly framed as collective enterprises for national improvement. Work on African oil landscapes has shown how petrocitizenship is increasingly associated with conservative social values, with authoritarian governments seeking to frame behaviors such as sex work, informal economic activity and labor, gender and minority rights advocacy as deviant, and therefore worthy of violent repression in order to create the stability necessary for proper resource exploitation (Obeng-Odoom, 2014; Holterman, 2014; Adusah-Karikari, 2015). In Latin American neo-extractive landscapes, traditions of mass demonstration and protest have made government control over behavior far more difficult. Focusing on similar indigenous conflicts over mining and oil and gas in Ecuador (Valdivia, 2008; Davidov, 2013; van Teijlingen, 2016) and Peru (McDonell, 2015; Jenkins, 2015), several scholars have argued that environmental citizenship and/or petrocitizenship mean different things to “progressive” national governments and their business allies and to “environmentalist” protesters, the majority of whom are indigenous and thus already possess an antagonistic relationship with existing structures of authority. Svampa (2015) has argued that post-neoliberalism is in fact a continuation of decades (and in some cases centuries) long

efforts on the part of White/Mestizo central governments to dispossess vulnerable residents of their right to land and subsistence resources in a quest to chart courses independent of “Washington consensus” capitalism. Indeed, in each of these authors’ cases, popular left-wing (and supposedly pro-environment) government officials have been willing to bypass existing agreements to protect both the environment and the rights of indigenous peoples in the name of achieving progress, whereas protestors have sought to re-articulate their citizenship as one focused on environmental protection as more important than temporary economic growth.

Such attitudes on the part of marginalized peoples have also been prominent in the limited body of studies on subjectivity in subsistence, mining and/or renewables production landscapes in other parts of the developing world. Research from landscapes as diverse as timber harvesting in India (Singh, 2013; Fischer and Chhatre, 2013), biofuels/smallholder conflicts in Brazil (Newberry, 2013), mining in the South Pacific (Horowitz, 2010; Sing, 2015) and water management in Paraguay (Ward, 2013) have shown that conflict between states and corporations on the one hand and affected citizens on the other results from attempts to impose new technologies on unwilling populaces in the name of sustainability. However, affected citizens often choose not to comply fully with these projects because they feel that their existing practices are often better at meeting these goals. Additionally, researchers have argued that rather than merely accepting or rejecting projects out of hand, marginalized citizens have often adapted specific technologies strategically in order to bolster their own livelihood prospects. Indeed, as described by Lord (2014) in his work on hydropower, nationalism and modernization in contemporary Nepal, residents see such development projects as

“aspirational projects where millions … are differently seeking well-being … within alternative futures and imaginaries … that are disparately formed and variably contested” (p. 117). Thus, while such projects can be viewed as a challenge to traditional livelihoods and knowledges, residents often view them as a chance to reassert their own identities vis-à-vis the state and politics and to potentially use these opportunities for advancement.

For residents in renewable and/or low-carbon energy landscapes in developed countries, though, such projects often represent not so much a chance at livelihood transformation, but are viewed more in terms of the risks and benefits they pose to quality of life in their communities and to economic growth or decline. Recent research examining wind power in West Texas (Jepson, Brannstrom and Persons, 2012), nuclear plants in the UK (Parkhill, et al., 2010) and farmers engaging in voluntary planting of bioenergy crops (Cope, McLafferty and Rhoads, 2011) has argued that residents in these landscapes display a form of environmental skepticism in which they disavow the sustainability goals of such projects and reject environmentalism, yet at the same time enthusiastically embrace the economic benefits these projects provide for them and their communities. Additionally, residents often viewed such projects as among the most viable pathways for economic growth, as they believe traditional, fossil-fuel-reliant industries will be made redundant due to an eventual transition towards renewable energy (see also Haggerty, 2007). Yet on the other hand, scholars examining projects as varied as hydroelectricity (Armstrong and Bulkeley, 2014), wind (Devine-Wright and Howes, 2010; Pasqualetti, 2011), biofuels (Gillon, 2010) and solar (Mulvaney, 2017) have found that when residents do support the environmental goals of renewable energy (and often champion said projects in other communities or in the abstract), they often oppose local

development due to fears of social disruption, marring of the aesthetic beauty or recreational capacity of the landscape or the decline of existing productive landscape uses (especially farming). However, in contrast to both environmental skeptic project supporters and environmentalist project opponents, it has been argued that residents in affected communities are easily swayed by arguments made in local media and by prominent supporters and detractors of low-carbon projects. Residents thus may choose to support or oppose development on the grounds of doing their proper civic duty, regardless of their personal feelings about the type of project being pursued or concerns about the ethics or outcomes of any one specific project (Walker, et al., 2010; Delshad and Raymond, 2013). Despite the potential contradictions between these three major research findings, a major conclusion of this body of literature is that while it may be easy to convince residents that energy development can support both economic or environmental goals in the abstract, it is more difficult to convince residents to accept specific projects in their communities if they feel there lifestyles or autonomy may be compromised.

Subjectivities research in non-renewable extractive landscapes in the developed world has been more limited than either neo-extractivist countries or in renewable landscapes around the world. However, these studies tend to be more directly related to behavioral change, rather than acceptance or resistance to projects, perhaps due to the tangible social and environmental disruptions inherent in large-scale subsurface extraction (Bridge, 2004; England and Albrecht, 1984). Indeed, change is one of the pre-eminent features of much of this work, as it is often focused on legacy extractive areas undergoing re-invigoration through new extractive processes and technologies. Research

from such disparate places as coal mines in Australia (Abrahamson and Somerville, 2007; LaPlonge and Albury, 2013), rural logging towns in British Columbia (Coen, et al., 2013) and offshore oil platforms in the United States (Austin, 2018) has found that older, male workers with conservative social values have often become the strongest advocates for industrial expansion and against health and safety regulations, as they view changes to the status quo (beneficial though they might be) as a slippery slope towards the destruction of their economic and social privilege. Similar masculine tropes as justification for continued extractivism in the face of contemporary political shifts is also found in studies on oil and gas conflicts in Mexico (Quist and Rinne, 2017), mining in the Western U.S. and Canada (Jensen-Ryan, 2014; Phillips, 2014; McAllister, Fitzpatrick and Fonseca, 2014) and hydraulic fracturing in Pennsylvania (Hudgins, 2013; Filteau, 2015). In each of these cases, notions of rugged masculinity and independence in labor pursuits, as well as appeals to extractive regimes as integral to traditional, nuclear social order in rural communities, were cited by residents and corporate project boosters alike as the main reasons why continued extraction is the only possible economic pathway for economically disadvantaged regions, even when other safer, more equitable alternatives might be available. However, a strong counterpoint to these masculinized appeals is found in Willow's work on anti-fracking activism in Ohio (Willow, et al., 2014; Willow and Keefer, 2015), in which largely middle-class women frame themselves as guardians against the slide into boorish, working-class masculinity and community and environmental breakdown that they feel the growth of hydraulic fracturing represents. To summarize, this rather divided literature on subjectivity in traditional extractive landscapes in the developed world demonstrates the cultural embeddedness of productivist values.

Residents of all backgrounds view extraction in terms of both its potential positive and negative effects on the economy, environment and society, but also in terms of the psychological outcomes of its continued existence or withdrawal. Indeed, such themes will be particularly evident in Chapter 6, which discusses the deep-seated fears that many residents of Minot have about the economic decline that the end of the Bakken boom will have on their communities, despite the fact that many respondents were ardent opponents of boom-related disruption and romanticizing the “clean life” of the pre-Boom days.

In summary, literatures on subjectivity in natural resource landscapes provides us with multiple avenues from which to understand the complex interplay between behavior, ideology and the physical environment. However, each of these literatures have strengths and weaknesses. Research in the neo-extractivist vein has provided a framework for demonstrating how extractive conflicts often exist alongside (or are seen as extensions of) existing struggles over land tenure, representation and traditional ways of life, among others. Additionally, this literature has demonstrated the powerful ways in which state authority seeks to demarcate appropriate behavior and in some cases, even directly intervene in citizens’ lives to enforce such boundaries. Yet the major downsides of this research are twofold: 1.) this literature is often heavily focused on group identity claims and often pays little attention to individual behaviors (perhaps a luxury that many in livelihood struggles do not have time to reflect on) and 2.) There is a heavy focus on protest and resistance, with the views of either non-activist or disaffected citizens receiving little attention. Each of these issues are remedied to some degree by the literatures on renewables and non-renewables in the developing world, as each of these

lines of inquiry pays close attention to both individual and collective grievances against specific production projects. It is, though, this major focus on specific grievances rooted in local cultures that often causes many studies under these rubrics to succumb to the opposite problem of neo-extractive literatures: a lack of connection with broader political and economic processes that often create the conditions necessary for localized forms of extraction. Although this dissertation does not seek to argue that local instances of extraction are simply manifestations of global neoliberalism or capitalism (the folly of which is discussed in Chapter 2.2), it is important to balance the roles that both local culture and larger-scale discourses play in determining on-the-ground experiences and behaviors, an attempt at which is made in Chapter 4's explication of the *Homo Dakoticus* concept.

Two other important shortcomings of the overall body of environmental subjectivity case study literature are: 1.) much of this literature falls into the classic political ecology trap of viewing the environment as merely an arena where political disputes play out, rather than as an important element in its own right (see Zimmerer and Bassett, 2003); and 2.) with notable exceptions, the vast majority of case studies make only passing mentions to theoretical innovators such as Agrawal and Luke (and to a lesser extent, Foucault) and do not attempt to engage with many of the foundational social theorists that have expounded on subjectivity outside of the environmental realm. While addressing each of these issues is beyond the scope of this dissertation, doing so will be important for moving environmental subjectivity forward as an important theoretical and analytical tool. Therefore, potential pathways for doing so will be addressed in Chapter 7.

2.5 Bakken case studies

As mentioned in Chapter 3.3, social science research in the Bakken is extremely limited. These literatures can be broadly separated into two major categories: 1.) confessional and artistic non-fiction writing that frames the emotional toll that fracking has taken on residents who long for the "clean" North Dakota of pre-boom days; and 2.) ethnographic case studies of fracking impacts in local Bakken communities. While each of these bodies of literature are strongly in-tune with the specific cultural milieu of North Dakota, as we will see in our brief overview, they largely replicate many of the same problems that can be seen in place-based studies of fracking that have been conducted in other regions.

In the artistic/confessional genre three major books standout: Lisa Westberg Peters' *Fractured Land: The Price of Inheriting Oil* (2014), Richard Edwards' *Natives of a Dry Place: Stories of Dakota before the Oil Boom* (2015) and Taylor Brorby and Stephanie Brook Trout's edited volume *Fracture: Essays, Poems, and Stories on Fracking in America*. Peters, a self-described liberal bookstore owner from Minneapolis, writes of the moral conundrum she faced after inheriting thousands of acres of Bakken mineral rights upon her father's death: how can a committed environmentalist reconcile her personal politics with the newfound prosperity that oil royalties have brought her? Although the book is somewhat limited by its confusing, non-linear organization and rambling stream-of-consciousness narration, Peters' diaries of her travels across North Dakota in search of answers to her major question provide stronger empirical evidence about the social impacts of the fracking boom than can be found in the majority of existing academic

studies. Similarly strong work is done by the career academic economist Edwards, whose humorous collection of folksy aphorisms and rural anecdotes provides one of the more concise depictions of the rural culture that underpins the North Dakota Way discussed in detail in Chapter 4 of this dissertation. However, the book is clearly pitched at a nostalgic, regional audience, as the majority of the book is filled with arcane cultural references unintelligible to Dakota outsiders, with Edwards additionally making little effort to contextualize these stories in the present context beyond wistful pronouncements about Dakota life being changed forever. A more explicitly politicized and contextualized take on fracking is provided by Brorby and Trout, whose book ranges from abstract feminist poetry to polemics from leading environmentalists such as Bill McKibben. While the book is often a strangely juxtaposed mélange of disconnected narratives (the majority of which do not discuss North Dakota). Bakken specific selections by Brorby and other Dakota natives, however, provide a strong psychological meditation on the complicated emotions of watching one's homeland be rendered unrecognizable through development and cultural change. Although such pieces are not written for academic audiences and do not engage with social theory, they deeply engage with subjectivity in a fashion untypical of most social science pieces on natural resources.

Explicitly academic social science studies of the Bakken are particularly rare, totaling slightly more than two dozen articles and book chapters. The most cited existing studies have come from either social work on criminology and have sought to examine how the Bakken has placed strains on limited rural social services (Weber, Geigle, & Barkdull, 2014; Archbold, Dahle, & Jordan, 2014; O'Connor, 2017). However, these studies are all narrowly focused on economic concerns and policy recommendations,

largely ignoring broader cultural issues and making limited attempts to connect these struggles to broader political themes. More substantive interventions are provided by Felix Fernando and in an edited volume by William Caraher and Kyle Conway. In a series of papers based on more than 100 in-depth interviews conducted among Bakken residents (Junod, et al., 2018; Fernando & Cooley, 2016a, b), Fernando has addressed all of the stereotypical hallmarks of fracking boom landscapes: residents opinions of the boom, elite stakeholders governance concerns, quality of life issues created by disruption, etc. These studies are among the only extant examples of long-term ethnographic research being conducted in the Bakken, and help to provide a strong picture of both the on-the-ground impacts of the boom, as well as a strong connection to the local culture not present in social work and criminological studies. Yet despite breaking new ground geographically, these studies, all of which employ the boomtown sociology framework, read almost identically to similar studies in the same vein from other shale plays. Crucially, these studies neither seek to frame the Bakken within larger political and environmental systems, nor do they engage with social theory in novel ways.

Caraher and Conway's *The Bakken goes Boom: Oil and the Changing Geographies of Western North Dakota* (2016), however, remedies both of these major issues. The editors explicitly argue in their introduction that economic processes in the Bakken, including the globalization of agriculture and the growth of the oil and gas industry, are the direct result of North Dakota's entanglement in global capitalism. Although the rest of the volume is uneven due to being split between theory-informed case studies and confessional/artistic pieces, the case studies chapters not only show evidence of deep engagement with the social particularities of the Bakken, but also apply

theory from a host of social science and humanities disciplines while also examining several uncommon topics in the existing literature such as the resource curse, domestic violence, sex trafficking and women's health. These studies serve as a foundation for this dissertation by seeking to move beyond many of the pitfalls that have plagued existing research on the community impacts of fracking development.

Although the existing literature on the Bakken is both sparse and often suffers from some of the same flaws found in fracking studies conducted in other areas, this literature provides several key findings that inform this dissertation's approach. First, North Dakota has not attracted the scholarly attention of other shale plays, thus there is much work to be done as far as elucidating its specific cultural milieu as well as how fracking-based development has been operationalized versus in other plays. Second, North Dakota's extra-territorial political relationships are quite different from those of shale states in Appalachia and the US South, leading to a different set of important local and geopolitical issues than are found in plays such as the Marcellus or Eagle Ford. Finally, although the oil and gas has been produced in North Dakota for more than six decades, unlike in shale boom regions in more traditional oil and gas states such as Texas and Colorado, the industry has not been a major economic player in the region until the present boom. Thus, residents' reactions to the fracking boom are likely to be different from residents in other plays who may have a longer history of interactions with oil and gas development.

2.6 Summary of key findings from the literature

While there are many findings from this literature, there are several strengths and weaknesses that are particularly relevant to the content of this dissertation. In

geographies of natural resources (Chapter 3.2), the main strengths are: 1.) Geopolitical studies provide a strong framework for exploring how extraction is conditioned by broader-scale political and economic forces; 2.) Case studies of renewable energy do an excellent job of describing how energy is operationalized in specific places; and 3.) Neo-extractivism is a model that provides a pathway for integrating geopolitical concerns alongside place-based phenomena. The weaknesses of natural resource geographies are: 1.) Case study approaches often fail to link local outcomes to broader processes identified in the geopolitics literature; 2.) With notable exceptions, case studies approaches are absent for fossil fuel production landscapes; and 3.) With notable exceptions, energy production case studies do not engage with theories of subjectivity.

For social studies of fracking, the main strengths are: 1.) Policy and opinion studies provide a broad overview of political issues related to fracking; 2.) Case studies provide rich empirical detail and analysis of local cultural contexts in which extraction occurs; and 3.) Scholars have made a strong case for viewing fracking in combination with other issues related to rurality such as agriculture, social isolation and revenue struggles. The main weaknesses of this literature are: 1.) With notable exception, scholars are overly reliant on the boomtown sociology framework for analysis, with studies often reading similarly despite taking place in markedly different cultural contexts; 2.) Case studies often fail to adequately connect local phenomena within the broader scale concerns identified in the policy literature; and 3.) There is a general bias toward the activist framing in most case studies, thus neglecting the majority, non-involved populations who reside in extractive zones.

The main strengths of the literature on environmental subjectivities in natural resource contexts are: 1.) Case studies provide strong examples of how ideology and technologies of government play a role in determining subjectivities and behaviors; 2.) Case studies in the neo-extractivist framing have provided a model for linking struggles over extraction to existing conflicts related to identity and land use; and 3.) Case studies in the first-world have provided a model for elucidating the difference between collective and individual grievances over the externalities of natural resource projects. Major weaknesses are: 1.) With notable exceptions, case studies do not link localized subjectivities to larger-scale discourses that may influence them; 2.) Outside of the neo-extractive studies in Africa and Latin America, there are few case studies of fossil fuels that explicitly examine subjectivities; and 3.) These studies often show superficial engagement with foundational theories of environmental subjectivity or theories of subjectivity more broadly.

Additionally, many of the same issues that have plagued case studies from each of these three major bodies of literature have also been present in the limited number of case studies specifically examining fracking in the Bakken. Thus, to rectify these issues, this dissertation will take several affirmative steps. Chapter 4 analyzes how discourses are shaped by elites and how these lead to a particular pro-extractive subjectivity rooted in long-standing North Dakota values. Chapter 5 examines the conflict between elite and non-elite actors regarding these values as they appear in North Dakota newspapers. This chapter is also empirically novel, as it focuses specifically on editorial coverage, a neglected area of inquiry in much of the fracking newspaper analysis literature. Chapter 6 retains the positive deep empirical and cultural analytical models used in existing case

studies of production landscapes, while also seeking to more directly connect economic development in the Bakken to broader-scale political processes. Additionally, this chapter connects localized subjectivities with the discourses identified in Chapters 4 and 5.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This research project uses a suite of qualitative methods to examine discourse generation and use among three distinct populations: 1.) oil industry, political and regulatory personnel involved in shaping policy about and promoting the state's oil and gas industry (referred to as elite or policy actors); 2.) Elite and non-elite writers of editorials in North Dakota-based newspapers regarding the oil boom; and 3.) Non-elite, non-industry connected residents of the boomtown of Minot, North Dakota. This chapter describes in detail each facet of the research process, including: a.) results of my preliminary research (3.2); b.) Positionality concerns I faced in conducting research among a group with which I have longstanding social ties (3.3); c.) A description of the research objectives and the underlying hypotheses (3.4); d.) The rationale behind each objective and sampling procedures (3.5); e.) Data collection procedures (3.6); and f.) Data analysis (3.7).

3.2 Preliminary research

My initial project idea, developed in May 2014, was to examine reactions among North Dakota residents to oil and gas-related accidents, specifically those related to pipeline and rail transportation. Two non-fatal 2013 accidents in particular had captured significant local and national media attention: a pipeline leak near Tioga in September and a train derailment in Casselton. Following Perry's (2012) article on fracking and community trauma, it was my initial contention that reactions to these events would be a

window to examine residents' post-disaster subjectivity, which I believed would involve expressions of fear, insecurity and disputes over who was to blame for the disasters, following Erikson's (1976) findings of "loss of community" following the Buffalo Creek floods in West Virginia. However, upon venturing to North Dakota for preliminary field work in the summer of 2014, I discovered that if I had applied my initial hypothesis, then I would have missed important emerging phenomena that appeared more relevant to human geographers than fracking accidents.

Upon arriving in Minot in Ward County and conducting my first set of interviews with residents (many of whom I was introduced to through my family), it became clear that industrial safety, as well as all general logistical and technical issues related to oil extraction, production and transport, were of minimal concern to residents when compared to quotidian quality-of-life concerns such as traffic, crime and the rising costs of gasoline, food and housing. Indeed, many residents spoke of a general fatigue and confusion about accidents, often displaying difficulty in distinguishing one accident from another. This resulted from near constant local media reporting on the subject, much of which was viewed as repetitive, contradictory and lacking in the context needed to "ground" such events in the personal milieus of readers (see Chapter 5.4.2.1).[3] The only major group that attempted to sway public opinion about the oil and gas industry using the accident framing was state-level Democratic politicians, who challenged the pro-industry status quo I analyzed elsewhere (T. Loder, 2016a).

[3] As I would discover throughout the project, a respondent's level of concern about industrial safety roughly mirrored their concern about the environmental impacts of oil and gas, thus accounting for this dissertation's lack of focus on traditional ecological issues outside those discussed in Chapter 5.

Due to my initial thesis being not applicable, I decided in September 2014 in to shift the focus of my research away from industrial safety and towards the aforementioned quality-of-life issues. My preliminary research yielded an important finding that would structure my research objective and, therefore, the entire dissertation: elite-level petroleum industry and trade-group conferences influenced oil and gas policy and shaping public opinion on the subject. However, before an in-depth explanation of the research objectives and process, I will briefly address issues of positionality that were important to determining how the research itself unfolded.

3.3 Positionality

Although I specifically began the Ph.D. program seeking to do research in North Dakota, my goal was to avoid doing research on hydraulic fracturing. This reticence was due to my family having longstanding social and political ties to North Dakota. For example, my paternal grandfather served as district attorney for Ward County (where much of my field research took place) and my maternal grandmother represented this same area in the North Dakota House of Representatives for more than three decades, including a term as Speaker of the House. Additionally, due to the savvy land investments of my maternal great grandfather, members of my family have earned substantial royalties from increased oil and gas production since 2007. While I have not personally benefited from these royalties and I had not ever lived permanently in North Dakota until I conducted the research for this project, I felt that potential conflicts of interest due to my family entanglement in the Bakken (as well as my own personal objections to the oil and gas industry, and hydraulic fracturing in particular) would have prevented me from maintaining

the objectivity necessary to properly conduct the research. However, after I consulted my maternal grandfather (the primary holder of the mineral rights) and told him that I was concerned about “not wanting to step on anyone’s toes” in my field research, he said that was not something to be concerned with and that he had his own ambivalent feelings about profiting off the oil industry and the negative effects he felt it was having on his home state (nearly all of my family have moved to Minnesota). After receiving his blessing, I decided to commit fully to a project examining hydraulic fracturing.

However, my research was not without significant positionality issues. One of the major issues I wrestled with was the insider/outsider dynamic. Although both sides of my family have deep roots in North Dakota and my parents grew up in Minot, I have lived outside of the state for my entire life and have limited direct ties to any communities there. Thus, I found myself frequently attempting to balance using my limited local cultural knowledge in order to connect with respondents, while at the same time being unable to fully relate to their experiences or fully understand their points of reference. Indeed, in the Bakken, being a native of the area is highly prized, as outsiders are seen historically as unknown quantities with questionable moral values (Norris, 1993) and more recently during the fracking boom as either greedy profiteers or “grungy” lowlifes associated with criminality (Reed, 2016). Despite never being directly marked as part of either of these groups, respondents often expressed sentiments much in line with those interviewed by Norris and Reed. Therefore I was always concerned with how I would be perceived and whether I could properly represent my subjects’ feelings without allowing my own outside biases to affect my interpretations, a problem I described in J. Jenkins, et al. (2015). This “dialogic” nature of the outside researcher has been previously remarked upon by

England (1994), who argues that it is nearly impossible to separate one's personal "biography" from the research process. England advocates for a strong awareness of the power dynamics at play in the qualitative process. While my own research did not necessarily present as many ethical issues as England's (a straight, white researcher working among a minority-heavy LGBT population), power relations became particularly important when dealing with specific groups of interviewees.

When I arrived in Minot for my dissertation research in 2015, I initially had trouble making contacts and finding respondents for the project. However, my fortunes greatly improved when my grandfather (who has retired to Arizona) put me in touch with his former long-time social circle "The Know it Alls", a tongue-in-cheek reference to the group both consisting entirely of retired business executives and their legendary reputation for bloviating on nearly any subject. This group, which consists of men over age 85, has met weekly for breakfast for more than 20 years. With the exception of those who have moved away or died (an increasingly frequent occurrence given the group members' advancing ages), membership in the group has remained largely unchanged, with many members having been social/business acquaintances for several decades and some members even being childhood friends. In addition to their social dimension, Know it Alls breakfasts also function as an important political venue for conservative politics in Minot; the group counts among its membership two former Republican state senators, the city's former city manager and the city's former Republican Party chairman (now deceased). In this capacity, the group hosts a once-monthly forum where prominent Republican politicians introduce policy proposals for the city, with the group's support being seen as necessary for such proposals to move forward (I was specifically not allowed to attend these

meetings). Indeed, the group relishes this purported kingmaker role, with one member boasting that the group had chosen Minot's three most recent mayors, as well as giving the initial approval to the ultimately successful initiative to decrease the size of the city council (see Chapter 6).

I was warmly welcomed (except into policy gatherings) into the group by my grandfather's old friends, all of whom were eager to hear stories of my grandfather and father, both of whom had long since left Minot. Many of the Know it Alls were happy to be interviewed as they were both excited to have a younger audience hear their views as well as to reminisce about pre-boom Minot. Although this provided me with incredible access to a treasure trove of information about the city's cultural foundations and inner political workings, I was at times thrust into roles in which I was either uncomfortable or for which I was ill-suited. Given my acknowledged outsider status as a Texan and as an academic studying oil and gas, many of these respondents believed that I was privy to confidential information from inside the industry as to the present and future state of exploration and production in the Bakken. Though I did in fact have some contacts with industry figures, I did not receive any special information from these respondents beyond a few uncharacteristically frank answers. Yet despite not having much privileged information for my Know it All respondents, I also felt a sense of obligation not to betray what knowledge these industry insiders had provided me, no matter how trivial. Thus, I was forced to speak in guarded terms and to use such phrases as, "I've heard from several people that we can expect a lot of bankruptcies and reduced activity this year."[4]

[4] These interviews all took place at the lowest point of the downturn in late 2015 and early 2016.

While such answers generally tended to satisfy respondents' curiosity, I felt that I was in an ethical grey area in which I was simultaneously perilously close to divulging "confidential" information from one set of respondents while also not being fully honest with another set.

Additionally, my family ties to the Know it Alls and other respondents also posed significant challenges to conduct interviews without the interference of outside bias. As both sides of my family have been heavily connected with Republican politics in Minot, many respondents assumed that I, too, must be a conservative (I am not). While I rarely prompted subjects to talk about specific political issues during interviews and did my best to refrain from injecting my own biases into my comments, many respondents, particularly the Know it Alls, put their political views high on the list of topics they most wanted to discuss. This became particularly challenging when many respondents would voice their opinion on an issue with the expectation that I agreed with them. One specific example is of a Know it All respondent who argued that if Minot were to adopt the views of then-candidate Donald Trump and other conservative Republicans, they would be far more successful economically and culturally. He then asked me point blank who I was voting for in the Republican primary, reasoning that if it were not Trump, it would have to have been Cruz due to my being from Texas. Despite prefacing my non-committal answer with the fact that I was sorry to disappoint him, I still felt that too much of this conversation was pushed in the wrong direction due to mistaken assumptions about politics. Following this experience, I attempted to avoid such situations in the future by arguing that I wanted to hear respondents' opinions on topics and that I would only be there to guide the interview. Indeed, this approach proved particularly effective in focus groups, as participants' felt

they had the freedom to discuss amongst each other, rather than under the impression that they were only giving answers to satisfy what they believed I wanted from them.

To summarize, the major challenges I faced with positionality during this research project were based upon my family history in the Bakken and reputational issues that this history created among respondents who either personally knew members of my family or who knew of them and their roles in Minot's political and business scene. Yet at the same time, I often felt like an outsider, at times struggling to understand the extremely place-specific cultural references that only a life-long North Dakotan could understand, while at other times being mistakenly viewed by respondents as an oil-and-gas policy expert and having to awkwardly sidestep or talk around such topics I had only superficially understood. This bind of being both an insider-confidant and outsider-expert in a shared racial and cultural community mirrored much of what was experienced by educational theorist Juanita Johnson-Bailey (1999) in her research on African American women who returned to university education after taking time off for a variety of issues such as family obligations, financial hardship or incarceration (defined as "re-entry Black women"). While Johnson-Bailey is herself a re-entry Black woman, and thus shared many race, gender and life experiences with her respondents, she, much as in my case, also struggled with the outsider status created by the implicit baggage of being an academic researcher assumed to be the consummate expert on all things related to her topic. Indeed, Johnson-Bailey spoke of the simultaneous level of unconsciously understanding her subjects while struggling to fully relate to many of the in-group particularities of a community she was largely divorced from due to the economic privilege and cultural separateness that came with her academic position:

> Throughout much of the feminist literature, discussions present all women as the same, a norm, and all people of color as similar. When a specific racial group is discussed, it is presented monolithically. The dilemmas that transpired in the field during this research proved such conclusions imprudent. My educational level and attached class status were mentioned by several of the respondents as factors that set me apart as different. It was conjectured by several respondents that "educated Blacks" think of themselves as "better" or superior to other members of the race … However, commensurate with the intensity of the scenario when Black women talk within racial and gender boundaries are benefits. There were silent understandings, culture- bound phrases that did not need interpretation, and nonverbalized answers conveyed with culture-specific hand gestures and facial expressions laced throughout the dialogue. At times these shared issues of race and gender were connections between the women (Johnson-Bailey, 1999, p. 663, 669).

Johnson – Bailey, however, concluded that despite the uncomfortable, and at times openly hostile, situations that such tensions provoked, the closeness and intimacy that developed over shared in-group experiences ultimately improved the research process for both researcher and respondent and made for better data gathering. In my own research, I, much like Johnson-Bailey, found that despite some of the awkwardness of being a researcher in a group with which I share ties, the ultimate closeness that such ties provide allowed a deeper connection to respondents which led to fuller and more useful responses than could have been obtained if I had solely been an outsider.

3.4 Research objectives

The overarching objective of this research is to examine how North Dakota residents understand and experience the fracking boom in North Dakota (2007-present). For this study, the research populations are divided between three groups: policy makers related to the oil and gas industry (including politicians, bureaucrats, business executives and interest group leaders), editorial writers in North Dakota newspapers and "longer-

term" residents of Bakken oil patch communities. For the purposes of this study, longer-term residents are those who have lived permanently in the oil patch for more than five years, based on the reasoning that these residents will have developed deeper community ties and have a stronger base from which to compare the pre- and post-boom Bakken than temporary residents or newer permanent residents. Following insights gained from preliminary research, this study began with the hypothesis that the lives of these residents were mediated both through their daily, direct experiences with the effects of the boom as well as through formal discourses about the boom created by the policy maker group, which are then filtered down to the "ordinary" population through print media.

Given this hypothesis, the research aimed to answer 3 related questions: 1.) How are formal and informal discourses about fracking produced and in what arenas do debates about these discourses occur?; 2.) How do the ways in which policy makers and ordinary residents (both within and outside the oil patch) understand and employ these discourses vary?; and 3.) How do these discourses support or conflict with the daily experiences of longer-term residents? Additionally, this research aims to test 3 quasi-hypotheses (Bebbington and Bury, 2009). First, individuals approach fracking differently based upon their employment status, ownership of mineral rights, concerns about the environment, and interpretation of media coverage (Boudet et al., 2014). Second, longer-term residents understand fracking based on cultural values rooted in specific understandings of place mediated through both experience and discourse (Devine-Wright, 2009; Hudgins and Poole, 2014). Third, level of awareness of key energy policies and politics affects the abilities of residents to participate in policy debates and contributes

to feelings of inclusion or alienation regarding fracking-led development (Malin, 2014; Arnold and Holahan, 2014).

Finally, following these research questions and hypotheses, 3 specific objectives were determined for collecting and analyzing data: 1.) Examine how elite-level policy makers created discourses surrounding fracking and how these discourses were used to advance specific political goals; 2.) interrogate how these discourses were employed in state-level print media by both elite and ordinary actors alike in order to debate the merits of specific boom-related policies; and 3.) study how longer-term oil patch residents understand fracking and to ascertain how and to what degree these media discourses effect such understandings. The following subsections will discuss the rationale behind these objectives and how respondents were identified, how data was collected and how data was analyzed. While there are separate subsections for each objective on rationale and data gathering, as the analysis techniques for both the elite and longer-term populations, these techniques are covered in a single section, while the newspaper analysis has its own section.

3.5 Objective rationale and identification of respondents

3.5.1. Policy rationale and respondent identification

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) refer to the linked network (and its governing rules) where elite-level in-group negotiations and policy making take place as the organizational field. Engaging elite stakeholders (those with significant ties and decision-making power within the field) as respondents has been demonstrated as a viable method in

ethnographic studies of fracking in contexts as varied as Colorado (Cook, 2014), the Texas Eagle Ford Shale (Murphy, et al., 2016) and the Bakken itself (Fernando and Cooley, 2016a). Additionally, such constellations of power in the energy sector have been identified as key sites for the contestation of energy governance norms (Osofsky and Wiseman, 2014). Therefore, this dissertation builds on these existing studies by engaging elite stakeholders in the oil and gas organizational field in North Dakota. The major purpose of this objective was to determine how this field operates and what discourses it generated. These identified discourses and themes were then used both in the analysis of state-level media (objective 2) and as springboards for discussion during ethnographic fieldwork with respondents at the local level (objective 3). This study had a goal of interviewing ~15-20 key policy actors; ultimately, I conducted 14 interviews and made contact with and gained information from approximately 3 dozen individuals through my participation in two workshops (only one of these individuals participated in an interview, but was not local to North Dakota and thus his information is not included in the dissertation), described in greater detail below.

My sampling strategy was purposive, based on the role or position of the person with regard to the oil industry or municipal or state government and policy making. As I had already had some experience in observing these arenas during my preliminary research (T. Loder, 2016a), this objective targeted many of these previously encountered players such as the various oil and economic development agencies of the North Dakota state government, the North Dakota Petroleum Council (NDPC, a private industry-supported lobbying group) and various pro-oil media and advocacy groups such as Shale Plays Media and the Bakken Backers (a “grassroots” group of industry supporters

composed largely of oil-related businesses and oil industry employees). Additionally, I sought to interview local officials from Bakken oil patch cities, in order to determine how boom-related policies were being generated at the local level.

While I believed in summer 2015 that I would have little difficulty securing meetings with these above-mentioned figures, I quickly discovered that many of these figures either did not want to participate in the project or were simply unreachable despite repeated attempts at contact. However, my fortunes with this set of potential respondents changed drastically once I attended an energy education workshop in August, 2015 run jointly by the aforementioned NDPC and the Lignite Energy Council (an equivalent group for the state's coal industry). At this workshop, I was able to develop strong connections not only with representatives from NDPC, but also with representatives from state government as well other non-elite conference attendees, one of whom became an important Minot based respondent for objective 3 (see T. Loder, 2016b for more information about this workshop). After the conference, I was easily able to schedule interviews with figures from the various agencies and groups, whose shift in tone indicated that I was neither a hostile figure nor someone interested in telling false stories about the Bakken and the oil industry.[5] Although some agencies and groups were still unwilling to talk to me or repeatedly claimed they were "too busy", I was able to gather information from a strong cross-section of state-level policy makers, totaling 7 interviews.

[5] According to one disgruntled former reporter for the Minot Daily News, this "scooping" by national news sources was the major reason all Dakota-based newspapers had placed a blanket ban on their employees speaking to outside sources about their work.

A second group that I targeted as respondents were members of the oil-related state media. As mentioned above [note 3], I had either ignored or was told outright to stay away by several of the state's major print newspapers, thus I began targeting web-based media sources that explicitly focused on the oil boom. While I was able to interview several prominent members on the pro-oil side, I had far greater success with those in the anti-oil camp. Indeed, many of those writing against the industry were often doing so independently and often without any financial support, and were thus very eager to have someone listen attentively to their stories.[6] This contrasted heavily with those from the pro-oil media, many of whom claimed they were working on tight schedules and thus could only speak briefly or would stick mainly to pro-industry talking points (not entirely unexpected as many of these figures had longstanding ties to groups such as NDPC and to North Dakota's conservative movement at-large). Overall, I interviewed 6 members of the oil-related media.

The final significant group from which I sampled purposively was local officials and business leaders in Minot, North Dakota, the dissertation's primary field case study site. Much of the access I had to this group was through family-based connections, with many respondents having knowledge of my older relatives, especially those that had served in the political arena. While this group was quite small (only 4 respondents), the respondents provided incredibly useful data, particularly in that they were able to demonstrate how state-level discourses and policies affected policy making at the local level. Indeed, in

[6] One respondent, Ron Schalow of the Coalition for Bakken Crude Oil Stabilization, spoke for more than 2 hours, a time period during which I asked only 7 questions.

many cases, while ideologically these respondents were largely on the same page as their state-level counterparts, they were far more open about the benefits and drawbacks of the boom and did not merely repeat talking points or serve as boosters for the petroleum industry.

3.5.2 Newspaper analysis rationale

Newspaper analysis in social studies of hydraulic fracturing has emerged as a distinct subset of this small, yet growing, body of research. Much of this research has attempted to examine how discourses about hydraulic fracturing have been propagated and what impact, if any, this might have on public opinion. While this research has varied in the types of newspapers it examines (local v. national, tabloid v. specialist, etc.) and has examined geographical locales as varied as small towns in Pennsylvania to the UK. This work has focused on 3 major areas: 1.) scientific and policy debates regarding fracking (Jaspal and Nerlich, 2014; Jaspal, Nerlich and Lemancyzk, 2014; Kroepsch, 2016); 2.) The creation of pro- and anti-fracking discourse coalitions (Cotton, Rattle and van Alstine, 2014; Metze, 2014; Vesalon and Cretan, 2015; Bomberg, 2014); and 3.) Impacts of fracking on local communities (Evensen, Clarke and Stedman, 2014; Arnold and Holahan, 2014; Ashmoore, et al., 2016). However, these studies have largely focused solely on fracking, rather than oil and gas as a whole, and with the exception of Kroepsch's (2016) study, have given scant attention to opinion pieces. Additionally, Hough (2015) attempted to perform discourse analysis on media coverage of fracking in the Bakken but only considered national-level newspaper coverage of the New York Times and was chiefly focused on online media. Thus, this dissertation builds on this

existing research while also addressing several of its gaps, namely: a.) lack of focus on editorial coverage, specifically in relation to local events that interact with national-level policy issues; b.) lack of focus on oil and gas beyond debates about the merits of fracking; and c.) lack of analysis of local print media in the Bakken.

While there are other forms of local media extant in the Bakken, newspapers (and their editorial sections, specifically) were chosen for this project for two major reasons. First, local newspapers, especially, in rural communities, are viewed as one of the key venues that provide social structure to a community by providing a shared cultural institution for its widely dispersed (geographically and socially) residents that helps to demarcate that community's values in ways that larger, urban newspapers do not. Janes (1959) argued that such a process occurred through specific coverage of community events and local culture that were often neglected by large-circulation newspapers that aim to serve a more nebulous and more diverse general public: "In a small town, a visit to a another town for shopping or visiting, falling sick, or just a local visit with friends will regularly appear in news items, but such events will not be regularly reported of persons in a larger community" (p. 108). Harry (2001), working in the tradition of the structural pluralist school of communications (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 1970), has further argued that this phenomenon is magnified in reporting of environmental controversies, with larger newspapers focusing mainly on overarching points of contention and smaller newspapers seeking to contextualize these struggles within the social and political environment of the communities in which they occur. Indeed, these patterns are well represented in many of the editorials analyzed in this study, which frequently place

fracking debates within a North Dakota-centric paradigm, using language and cultural references that outsiders lacking local knowledge would have difficulty understanding.

Second, newspapers have been identified as one of the pre-eminent venues where contentious social issues are publicly debated in a quest to create dominant narratives. Critical discourse theorists such as Wodak and Meyer (2009) and Fairclough (2013) have argued that powerful societal actors use media to portray their views as normal and desirable, thus making analysis a tool for ascertaining how dominant narratives are promulgated. Harry (2001) argues that this hegemonic style is historically more pronounced in small, rural newspapers due to the consensus-based politics that prevails in these types of communities. However, as a counterpoint, he suggests the approach taken by C.E. Taylor, Lee and Davie (2000), who viewed newspapers from smaller, suburbanized communities under 100,000 residents as “fragmented” or caught between the more pluralistic big city newspaper approach and the smaller consensus-seeking approach of rural newspapers published in urban conurbations with fewer than 2,000 residents. Fragmented cities are more diverse than purely rural communities, yet not large enough in population to be considered urban. To avoid any of the pitfalls of the big city or rural newspaper approaches, the authors supplemented “news items” (hard news stories) with “non-news items” (editorials/letters-to-the-editor and advertisements), which they felt gave the community more of an opportunity to voice their opinions on debates regarding an incinerator in Morgan City, Louisiana. Given the consensus-based politics of North Dakota (see Chapter 4) and that all but one of the newspapers included in this dissertation’s sample are published in fragmented cities, editorial analysis can be

expected to provide a window into the creation of discourses around key debates related to hydraulic fracturing in North Dakota.

3.5.3 Sampling strategy for longer-term residents

Community-based, ethnographic studies on fracking have analyzed the role that oil boom-related growth plays in the economic and social life of communities. These studies have examined various issues such as how economic stakeholders and regulators deal with boom externalities and uncertainties (Cook, 2014; Murphy, et al., 2016; Fernando and Cooley, 2016), quality of life impacts in fracking boomtowns (Hudgins, 2013; Pearson, 2013), and the ways in which activist coalitions emerge to oppose hydraulic fracturing (Willow and Keefer, 2015; Simonelli, 2014), among many others. However, one of the major under-examined phenomena in fracking landscapes has been the way in which non-elite, non-activist and non-petroleum industry affiliated permanent residents—people without a significant personal stake in the success or failure of resource extraction-- experience the fracking boom and how this experience is interpreted through a long-standing cultural filter unique to each boomtown. These residents are referred to throughout this dissertation as “everyday” or “ordinary” residents. This dissertation aims to analyze to how social and political attitudes affect the ways in which “ordinary” residents understand the oil-related changes that are happening in their community. The particular goal of this research objective is to examine how formal and informal discourses about fracking and related developments (many of which are created at scales beyond and divorced from the everyday realities of boomtown life) circulate “on-

the-ground" in fracking boomtowns and what role they play in shaping respondents views of the oil boom.

While many of the above cited studies engage with permanent residents of fracking boom regions, the criteria for determining what constitutes permanence is not always made clear. Therefore, for this dissertation, purposive sampling targeted people who have lived in Minot for five or more consecutive years. This study refers to these respondents as "longer-term residents." While this restriction excludes some newcomers who are now developing social ties in the community, the rationale behind focusing on this specific sub-population is to gauge the views of residents who have been in the community before and during the oil boom. It is hypothesized that these residents will have, a.) Better understanding of the social and economic differences between pre-boom and boom Minot; b.) Greater understanding of and exposure to the specific cultural milieu of both Minot and North Dakota as a whole; and c.) Greater familiarity with and exposure to outlets for the dissemination of discourses (local media, face-to-face interaction with community members, etc.). Other studies have used probabilistic sampling methods to identify respondents to mail-out surveys regarding attitudes to disruption (Theodori, 2012, 2013), but this study specifically attempts to purposively sample respondents for in-person interviews and focus groups. We reasoned that the longer-term cohort would perhaps be less likely to respond to mail-out surveys because they are not being strongly polarized on the fracking issue: they did not move to Minot to participate in the boom, nor did they benefit financially from the boom. Purposive sampling of this group has the advantage of reducing this sampling bias, but it has the disadvantage of not producing

generalizable results. This study had a goal of engaging ~35-40 respondents in interviews and focus groups.

I initially believed that I would have little difficulty finding respondents for this study due to my strong family ties to the community. But during field work it quickly became clear that many of the respondents I had hoped to interview had either left Minot or had passed away. Additionally, although I quickly made the acquaintance of multiple individuals who I felt would have made useful respondents, most of these residents had themselves only moved to Minot within the past 1-3 years and thus did not qualify as longer-term. However, my fortunes changed when I began more assertively engaging myself in the community socially. As mentioned in Chapter 3.3, I gained a significant number of respondents through my connection to the Know It Alls social group of retired male professionals. These respondents additionally put me in touch with other member of their social circles, thus allowing my sample to grow through snowballing. Additionally, I gained several respondents through attending social groups I discovered on Meetup.com, a website that allows users to discover events and clubs in their area. By becoming acquainted socially with these club members and informing them of the goals of my research project, I was able to gain their trust, which allowed for better conversational flow and a greater willingness to share details of their personal lives in subsequent interviews. Additionally, the shared social circle that these groups fostered provided a useful environment from which to recruit participants for subsequent focus groups, as these respondents felt comfortable engaging in group discussions with their peers.

In addition to the respondents gained through these two social circles, I also gained several respondents through a combination of snowballing out from these two groups, as well as contacting notable community members who had been identified to me by family members and respondents. Of particular note among this subset were 3 key figures I interviewed who were connected with Minot Public Schools. Although these figures did not have directed connections to oil and gas related policy making, they served as a bridge figures who had both experience in local government and administration, as well as having been “ordinary” community members with local cultural knowledge. These respondents provided me with invaluable insider information on notable conflicts about education and employment opportunities for local youth, which formed significant topics of analysis in Chapter 6 (section 4.3).

3.6 Data Collection

3.6.1 Policy interview and participant observation procedures

The majority of the research for this objective (objective 1) consisted of semi-structured interviews in order to allow for maximum respondent and interviewer freedom. Therefore, I prepared an interview protocol covering key themes. As these interviews were highly focused on elite-level oil and gas policy figures and their roles during the period in which North Dakota’s economy was reconfigured around their industry, this method draws heavily from Schoenberger’s conception of the open-ended corporate interview. Schoenberger notes this approach focuses on “the real-world predicaments and strategies” of “institutional agents embedded in a complex network of internal and

external relationships", a situation which is made particularly acute during "periods of great economic and social change … characterized by the rise of new industries and the retrenchment of older ones, the diffusion of new technologies and new principles of industrial organization" (Schoenberger, 1991, p. 181). Certainly, North Dakota in the Bakken boom period matches these criteria.

Building on another tenet from Schoenberg, these interviews would seek to examine each respondent as responding to an equivalent phenomenon (in this case the fracking boom), while also having slightly different responses based on their own histories and political economic capacities in North Dakota's oil and gas policy milieu. Therefore, I varied questions based upon the respondents' job duties (i.e. a chamber of commerce representative would receive slightly different questions than would a state-government official in charge of pipeline safety), but the major points that were in every protocol were as follows:

> 1.) How has your role and that of your organization changed as a result of the different stages of the fracking boom (pre- (before 2007), during (2007), and post- (2015-2016)
> 2.) What do you feel have been some of the biggest benefits and drawbacks for North Dakota as a result of the boom?
> 3. What do you think the biggest challenge will be for North Dakota going forward?
> 4.) Do you believe the media has done a good and fair job of covering North Dakota and the boom? What do you think need to be done better/differently?

Indeed, this last question was of particular importance to the project due to the need to discern key themes and create prompts regarding the role of ideology transmission through media that would be used in objectives 2 and 3.

In addition to interview-based respondents, I also attended 3 conferences where those attempting to influence oil and gas policy were present: 1.) The annual Williston Basin Petroleum Conference (WBPC) sponsored by the NDPC; 2.) A Bakken Basics education session, sponsored jointly be the NDPC and the Lignite Energy Council; and 3.) The annual meeting of the Extreme Energy Extraction Collaborative (E3C), a collection of activists seeking to oppose practices such as fracking, sand mining and tar sands production.[7] I specifically use the words "attempting to influence" because participants at the latter conference were excluded from formal policy conversations, whereas the first two conferences were attended by the very people who either write, vote on or implement the majority of oil and gas policies for the state of North Dakota. Despite only conducting one interview at these events, I was able to absorb information, recorded in field notes, just by being a proverbial "fly on the wall"; I felt as if I was given exclusive access to the inner workings of these incredibly different communities with minimal effort on my part. While I was somewhat familiar with the culture at the two fossil fuels conferences given my academic background and having already forged links in those specific communities (indeed, at Bakken Basics I was also among fellow academics), this feeling was particularly acute at E3C, as I was unfamiliar with the specialized language and lifestyle that accompanied the activist community. Indeed, during several tense debates between white and non-white attendees at E3C, I felt very confused and alienated from the overall

[7] As most of the attendees at this latter conference were not North Dakotans and/or were at work on issues or than fracking in the Bakken, the data I gathered there is largely not included in the dissertation. This conference did, however, provide me with a window into a neglected side of the conversation in North Dakota and also challenged me as a researcher, thus I felt it was important to include a reflection in this section.

debate, as it seemed to have completely diverged from the extractive industries, a far cry from the industry events where the agenda was always laser focused.[8] Although I did at times feel like a tourist, or worse a voyeur, at some of these events, I felt that in many ways the data I gathered was less biased or less directed than that I gathered in interviews. Indeed, despite not being able to create the trust relationships inherent in one-on-one interviews (see section 3.3), many of these residents seemed freer to express themselves in these gatherings of like-minded individuals, as they felt (often correctly) that these were safe spaces where they could share "controversial" or "confidential" ideas without fear of judgment (or in the case of some activists working in politically sensitive arenas or employing less-than-legal tactics, actual punishment). Yet despite my own discomfort at these venues due to either being unable to "speak the language" of participants (E3C) or feeling excluded from key conversations and moments due to the chummy, "old boys' club" atmosphere (WBPC), some of the most illuminating qualitative data came from the presentations I observed. These conferences mirrored Laurier's maxim on participant observation in unfamiliar places: "Yet while it is a struggle to observe what is happening in these places, let alone participate in them, your findings will be of value by the very fact that how many unfamiliar places are organized is not part of the everyday knowledge of members of society" (Laurier, 2010, p.119).

[8] In T. Loder (2016b), I wrote about how many of these conflicts came about as a result of younger, non-white and LGBT activists feeling that the struggle for the recognition of their identities and overcoming economic marginalization in their home communities preceded any environmental activism. This feeling was not shared by the older, largely white activists, who seemed to have done little reflection about their own identities and felt that the environment trumped any other concern.

3.6.2 Newspaper data collection

The newspapers analyzed in this dissertation were identified using the directory of the North Dakota Newspaper Association, a trade group for the publishers of newspapers throughout the state. Initially, 10 newspapers were chosen in order to create a balance between large circulation newspapers from populous and/or politically important cities (Fargo, Grand Forks and the state capital, Bismarck) and cities and smaller towns in the core Bakken region. Additionally, these newspapers were specifically chosen because all possessed online archives and could be accessed without visiting the local archives where back issues of specific newspapers would be held. However, upon further investigation, only 5 of these newspapers were deemed as viable for the study. Excluded papers had either incomplete archival coverage or significant duplicated the editorial content of other newspapers on the list owned by the same media conglomerate (see Table 3 (p.86) for a listing of the included newspapers).

The time period for data collection was the 5-year interval between August 1, 2011-July 31, 2016 (the latter date being when archival searches began), with this period chosen due to encompassing the beginning and height of the boom (2011-2014), as well as the more recent bust period (2015-2016). Searches of online archives were initially conducted using a set of keywords such as “oil”, “gas”, “Bakken” and “fracking.” This approach, however, proved unsuccessful, as many of the archives either did not properly tag their articles and/or only allowed article titles (not body text) to be searched, thus yielding an incomplete set of results when compared to a cursory manual search. Despite being time consuming, it became clear that the only way to properly query the online

archives was to manually examine each of the editorials in reverse chronological order. This task was made somewhat easier as all but the TT allowed for editorials/LTEs to be searched separately from other content.[9] Articles with titles that were clearly not related to oil and gas were immediately excluded, whereas any article with either a clear oil and gas theme or an ambiguous title was read individually to determine whether it should be kept or discarded.

After completing this querying process for each newspaper, a total of 1,535 editorials were identified (FF=640, MDN=85, WH=68, DP=591, TT=151). As this was seen as too large a sample for analysis, a strategy for selecting specific articles was devised. Although a random-stratification sampling approach (Stempel, 1952) was considered (i.e. choosing a day of the month and then sampling only results from that day each month, etc.), the small overall sample sizes from the WH, MDN and TT meant that such an approach would have resulted in a very small filtered sample. Thus, instead, I chose to filter my overall sample by choosing editorials focused on specific events, an approach successfully used by Jaspal and Nerlich (2014) in their analysis of fracking in UK newspapers. The two specific events chosen were: 1.) Measure 5 (M5), a conservation measure on the state-wide ballot in 2014 and 2.) The Keystone XL (KXL) pipeline.

This led to a sample size of 271 editorials, with 117 from the DP, 115 from the FF, 26 from the MDN, 11 from the TT and 2 from the WH. Both the DP and the FF are

[9] The TT was only available as a non-text searchable PDF of each issue. To sample this newspaper, I had to find each editorial, read it to determine if it was related to oil and gas issues and then manually take a screenshot.

Newspaper	Location	Pop. (2016)	Pop. served	Core city (Y/N)
Fargo Forum	Fargo, ND	120,762	Urban	N
Minot Daily News	Minot, ND	48,743	Urban	Y
Williston Herald	Williston, ND	26,426	Mixed urban/rural	Y
Dickinson Press	Dickinson, ND	23,400	Mixed urban/rural	Y
Tioga Tribune	Tioga, ND	1,547	Rural	Y

Table 3: Names and Locations of Selected Newspapers

owned by the same large conglomerate (Forum Communications), thus Forum Communications' opinions are over-represented in the sample (232 items, ~86% of the total). Forum Communications content is often recycled among these papers as well as other papers in the company's portfolio (such as the Grand Forks Herald and the Jamestown Sun) that are not included in the sample. Duplicate items were removed based upon either: 1.) which paper published first; and b.) which paper was originally responsible for the content.

This sample was then broken down into several categories (see Tables 4 and 5 (p.88-89)). First, I determined that editorials/LTEs were written by 6 distinct types of authors. Concerned Citizen Writers (CCW) are any writers who are either not professional journalists or are not politicians or affiliated with the oil industry. Local Editorial Writers (LEW) are North Dakota-based professional journalists who either write for a specific newspaper or are syndicated in various newspapers across the state. Interest Group Writers are writers affiliated with non-oil and gas interest groups advocating for specific policy positions (i.e. North Dakotans for Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks, an umbrella group lobbying on behalf of M5). Politicians are current and former candidates, holders of elected office and appointed officials representing North Dakota at the local, state and federal levels. Industry-Affiliated Writers (IAW) are writers who either work directly for oil and gas companies or for oil and gas advocacy groups.

Newspaper	Total eds.	Pro-industry position (% of total by newspaper)	Anti-industry positions (% of total by newspaper	Neutral positions (% of total by newspaper)
DP	117	66 (56%)	45 (38%)	6 (5%)
FF	115	45 (39%)	67 (58%)	5 (3%)
MDN	26	21 (81%)	3 (12%)	2 (8%)
TT	11	6 (55%)	2 (11%)	3 (27%)
WH	2	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
	n=271			

Table 4: Editorials by Position

Type of writer	No. of eds.	% of sample	Pro-industry positions (% of total by group)	Anti-industry positions (% of total by group)	Neutral positions (% of total by group)
CCW	153	56%	64 (42%)	88 (56%)	1 (<1%)
LEW	67	25%	49 (73%)	8 (12%)	10 (15%)
IGW	25	9%	16 (64%)	9 (36%)	0 (0%)
Politician	31	8%	18 (86%)	3 (14%)	0 (0%)
IAW	3	<1%	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
NSC	2	<1%	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	n=271				

Table 5: Editorials by Writer-type

Nationally Syndicated Columnists (NSC) are non-North Dakota-based columnists whose columns are published in North Dakota newspapers. The small samples from the MDN, TT and WH are due to 3 major differences between these papers and the two Forum Communications papers (DP and FF) : the lower number of editorials written in these 3 papers overall (thus leading to fewer editorials on all topics), a greater focus on intensely local events rather than state or national events and an extremely low level of participation by non-professionals (writers other than LEWs and NSCs), especially CCWs, who make up a disproportionate share of the overall sample.

The sample articles were strongly polarized along pro- and anti-industry lines, with nearly all articles taking an affirmative position either for or against the petroleum industry's preferred position on either issue (opposition to M5 and support for KXL, respectively). Overall, the pro-industry/anti-industry/neutral split was 51/43/6%, respectively. However, this varied strongly by newspaper. The DP, MDN, WH and TT were all strongly pro-industry, with each newspaper being more than 50% pro-industry and less than 40% anti-industry. The FF, though, was an outlier, with its pro-industry/anti-industry/neutral split being 39%/58%/3%, respectively, largely due to the relative over-representation of CCWS, who trend strongly anti-industry as a group. As editorials from the FF make up 42% of the sample, the sample skews significantly more towards an anti-industry position than if the FF were to be excluded.

Among the different groups of writers, a similar trend was observed. Indeed, while CCWs broke 42/58/<1% pro-industry, anti-industry, neutral, respectively, all other writer groups were >60% pro-industry. Yet despite a clear majority of non-CCWs taking pro-

industry positions, the sample is only moderately pro-industry due to the outsized influence of anti-industry CCWs, who make up a slight majority of the sample.

Regarding the two issues, M5 was the most debated topic among the articles in our sample, comprising 65 % of the total articles examined (175 out of 271). Overall, this subset consisted of slightly more anti-M5, opinions (53%) than pro-M5, ones (43%), with only a small percentage remaining neutral (4%). As with the overall sample, the FF was significantly more anti-industry than the DP, MDN, WH and TT and thus obfuscated the overall pro-industry body of opinion expressed in those papers due to its significant contribution to the total articles in the subset (40% of the 175). Similarly, this pro-industry/anti-industry divide persisted across different writer groups, with CCWs (66% of the subset) breaking 47% anti-M5 to 53% pro-M5, while all other groups were over 50% anti-M5, with only LEWs being less than 60% pro-M5 (see Tables 6 and 7 (p. 92-93) for exact figures).

KXL editorials made up a smaller, yet no less passionate, sample. Of the 96 total articles examined, 47 articles (49%) expressed pro-KXL sentiments, 41 articles (43%) expressed anti-KXL sentiments, while only 8 articles (8%) remained neutral. As was the case with the overall sample, FF letters on KXL (47% of the subsample) tended to skew more anti-industry than pro-industry (71% versus 24%, respectively), while the DP (31% of the subsample) and MDN (18% of the subsample) were far more pro-industry (70% pro-industry versus 27% anti-industry and 82% pro-industry versus 6% anti-industry, respectively). The TT and the WH contributed only 4 articles total (4% of the subsample),

Newspaper	Number of M5 articles	Pro M5 (anti-industry) editorials (% of total)	Anti M5 (pro-industry) editorials (% of total)	Neutral editorials (% of total)
Dickinson Press	87	37 (43%)	45 (52%)	5 (6%)
Fargo Forum	70	35 (50%)	34 (49%)	1 (1%)
Minot Daily News	9	2 (22%)	7 (78%)	0 (0%)
Tioga Tribune	9	2 (22%)	6 (67%)	1 (11%)
Total	175	76 (43%)	92 (53%)	7 (4%)

Table 6: Measure 5 Editorials by Newspaper

Type of writer	Number of M5 articles	Pro M5 (anti-industry) editorials (% of total)	Anti M5 (pro-industry) editorials (% of total)	Neutral editorials (% of total)
Concerned Citizen Writer	116	61 (53%)	54 (47%)	1 (>1%)
Local Editorial Writer	25	6 (24%)	13 (52%)	6 (24%)
Interest Group Writer	19	6 (32%)	13 (68%)	0 (0%)
Politician	14	3 (22%)	11 (78%)	0 (0%)
Industry Affiliated Writer	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)
Total	175	76 (43%)	92 (53%)	7 (4%)

Table 7: Measure 5 Editorials by Writer Group

with 3 (75%) being neutral and 1 being pro-industry (25%) (See Table 8 (p. 95) for exact figures). In terms of authorship, CCWs (37 editorials) trended strongly anti-industry (73% anti-industry versus 23% pro-industry), whereas nearly all other groups, except IGWs (who were evenly split), trended almost wholly pro-industry. As with the overall sample, CCWs formed a strong plurality of all editorials on KXL, thus this subsample appears far more anti-industry than the unified pro-KXL stance of most professional writers would suggest (see Table 9 (p. 96) for exact figures).

Newspaper	Number of KXL articles	Pro-KXL (pro-industry) editorials (% of total)	Anti-KXL (anti-industry) editorials (% of total)	Neutral editorials (% of total)
Dickinson Press	30	21 (70%)	8 (27%)	1 (3%)
Fargo Forum	45	11 (24%)	32 (71%)	2 (4%)
Minot Daily News	17	14 (82%)	1 (6%)	2 (12%)
Tioga Tribune	2	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Williston Herald	2	1 (50%)	0	1 (50%)
Total	96	47 (49%)	41 (43%)	8 (8%)

Table 8: KXL Editorials by Newspaper

Type of writer	Number of KXL articles	Pro-KXL (pro-industry) editorials (% of total)	Anti-KXL (anti-industry) editorials (% of total)	Neutral editorials (% of total)
Concerned Citizen Writer	37	10 (27%)	27 (73%)	0 (0%)
Local Editorial Writer	42	36 (86%)	0 (0%)	6 (14%)
Interest Group Writer	6	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	0 (0%)
Politician	7	7 (100%	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Industry Affiliated Writer	2	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Nationally Syndicated Columnist	2	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	96	47 (49%)	41 (43%)	8 (8%)

Table 9: KXL Editorials by Writer Group

3.6.3 Longer-term interview and focus group procedures

As was the case with the policy interviews in 3.6.1, the interviews for the longer-term subset (n=18) were conducted in a semi-structured fashion. While I had a standard slate of questions prepared for respondents, my goal was to allow respondents the maximum amount of freedom in discussing the topics that were of greatest importance to them. However, whereas my conception of the policy interviews was largely based on Schoenberger's conception of the open-ended corporate interview, the Minot interviews were a much more intimate research endeavor. These interviews were conducted in far less formal settings with respondents whom I in many cases already shared a social relationship and in which there was far less trepidation on the part of both researcher and respondent about speaking to “experts” who would potentially judge one another for lack of knowledge or formality. In her chapter on interviewing in the *SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography*, Linda McDowell argues that in such cases of interpersonal familiarity, interviews often take on the qualities of a social exchange of information, rather than a one-sided transaction in which a researcher extracts knowledge from their respondents. This entanglement, she argues, is an unavoidable, and in fact, desirable, part of engaged research that takes seriously power dynamics in the researcher/subject relationship, resulting in ultimately stronger interview questions that seek to interrogate the specificities of time, place and politics that underlie in-person interviewing regarding time and place-related phenomena:

> ‘Reality’ is no longer assumed to be ‘out there’, waiting to be discovered, named and described by social researchers but is itself constituted in and

> by discourse, and embodied interactions, as are the representations that we chose to construct from fieldwork and interviewing. Thus we construct questions to ask and make knowledge claims on the basis of what we discover though the already existing conventions of language and discourse within which we are working (McDowell, 2010, p. 160).

Indeed, as mentioned in 3.5.3, the trust relationships I created with my subjects prior to approaching them for interviews was critical in both increasing the likelihood of these subjects agreeing to interviews as well as feeling more comfortable sharing intimate details during the interviews themselves. Additionally, following McDowell's contentions about "the already existing conventions of language and discourse," I found that my growing familiarity with the local culture of longer-term respondents allowed me to establish a stronger rapport during interviews and allowed me to ask culturally- and geographically-specific questions that I would not have been able to ask without such entanglement with Minot's specific cultural milieu.

However, despite allowing these close, culturally-mediated relationships to dictate the flow and focus of the majority of my interviews, I always made sure to ask each respondent about key topics. These topics were drawn from discourses generated from results from the policy interview data, as well as newspaper data collected in objective 2. Of particular importance were the following questions:

1. How did you first come to know about the importance of oil in the Bakken and hydraulic fracturing?
2. When were you first aware of the fracking boom occurring and what were some of the key changes you have noticed as a result?
3. What is your opinion of the way local media has covered the boom? Do you notice major differences between local media and national media narratives about the Bakken?

4. What do you think the biggest challenge will be for Minot in the future? Will this future look different if the oil industry is no longer a major factor in the economy?

Although each of these questions covers somewhat different subjects, they all are intertwined as they help to establish how existing discourses (of both the media and face-to-face varieties) are filtered down to the public. Indeed, while question 4 specifically examines media consumption, questions 1 and 2 elicited a host of answers that often directly pointed to the conduit through which such understandings were transmitted, with responses including such varied sources as school history classes, hearing gossip from neighbors, postings on social media and more traditional print and television media. Such answers made it clear that while traditional media still held a strong place in Minot's information landscape (especially among older male respondents), there were a host of competing discourses that were often seen as more trustworthy.

Another major benefit to conducting interviews in a semi-structured manner was that I was able to be attuned to the particular topics that residents found to be of greatest importance in their understanding of how the oil boom had changed Minot. While my *a priori* reasoning had conditioned me to expect responses about issues such as crime, traffic and infrastructure, I was unprepared for how concerned residents were about lingering recovery issues related the 2011 Souris River flood or the long-term career prospects of Minot's youth. In my early interviews, respondents continually raised these issues without prompting and were often far more animated on these subjects than on those related to more direct boomtown effects. In my later interviews, I began to use these two discourses as prompts in order to engage respondents, as they served to help both

make them comfortable and to allow them to speak at length about a topic that nearly everyone had an opinion on. This was particularly true in the case of more reserved respondents who often had little to say about the conventional externalities or were unwilling to directly criticize the oil industry (see Chapter 6). Indeed, if I had not been cognizant of interviewees' feelings about their community and solely sought to have them answer questions about what I thought was important, I would not have received as strong responses as I did.

In addition to interviews, I also conducted 2 focus groups (n=7, with 1 respondent being among the 18 interview respondents) with these longer-term residents. In each of these focus groups, the respondents already knew one another due to being part of the same extended social circle, with each focus group being purposely scheduled around a group social activity such as gathering for food. My approach drew strong inspiration from Bosco and Turner (2010), who argue that focus groups in critical geography should function as a "collaborative performance" in which researchers and participants collectively converse in order to draw out responses that would not emerge in individual interviews. The goal of this collaborative performance, then is about, "exploring the dynamics of social discourse and social practice in relation to the construction of collective meaning" (p. 195). This notion of collective meaning proved particularly important as focus group respondents largely framed their understandings of boom effects in relation to the violation of strongly-held community-based cultural values (see Chapter 6). As Bosco and Turner note, this process of emergence of unexpected themes specifically in these internal group conversations allows for researcher theories to be reworked in light of new knowledge that only emerges from these shared conversations that individuals

have among their peers. Indeed, as mentioned in greater detail in section 3.5.3, the fact that many respondents already knew and trusted both me and each other as friends and social equals meant that they had no qualms about broaching contentious topics such as the broader role of the oil industry in North Dakota, and the genuine, race- and class-based suspicions they had of in-migrants.

As far a specific questions asked during focus groups, these were roughly similar to those asked of interview participants covering topics such as how respondents became aware of fracking in the Bakken, what impacts of the oil boom have they noticed and what the major future challenges for Minot will be. Additionally, these focus groups often served as opportunities for participants to discuss their own personal lives in relation to the boom, which often spurred respondents to delve into subjects that I often had not considered in my initial questioning, particularly around issues such as youth entitlement and criminality. Finally, the second of two focus groups offered one of the only examples of respondents offering open denunciations of the oil and gas industry, with one respondent being especially critical of what she believed to be the negative environmental impacts of drilling and fracking.

Thus, to summarize, it was precisely my cultivation of these trust relationships that allowed me to successfully gather data that I feel I would not have been able to if I had taken a more formal and rigid ethnographic approach or if I had attempted to gauge residents' feeling through a probabilistic sample design aiming to recruit hundreds or thousands of respondents. Although my positionality conflicts and social ties to many of my respondents may have caused me to at times blurred the lines between personal and professional and objective and subjective in my interviews and focus groups, I believe

that a more traditional, objective approach would have led to a greater number of interviews with uninterested and non-talkative subjects, which would have produced much more “standard” and expected data such as what was produced from many of my interviews with policy actors.

3.7 Data analysis

3.7.1 Interview, focus group and participant observation analysis

While just under half of the interviews (n=11) and both focus groups (n=2) were recorded, most interview (n=13) were done in either an impromptu fashion or over the phone, thus recording was either impractical or not feasible. In this latter case, I took detailed notes including word-for-word quotations of important things that were said. While the non-recorded interviews were transcribed by copying handwritten notes word-for-word, recorded interviews were coded by attempting to strike a balance between a naturalized and de-naturalized approach. The former approach seeks to transcribe not only every word, but also grammatical and verbal mistakes, dead space in recordings, filler words (such as “um” or hmm”) and all sorts of non-speech cues as to the respondents’ behavior (i.e. displays of emotion such as laughter or crying, hesitation implying discomfort or doubt, changes in tone and volume, etc.). On the other hand, the de-naturalized approach seeks to create a “clean” transcript free of any mistakes or fillers. Although both of these approaches have their own merits depending upon the researchers analytical goals, as the analysis was focused largely on meaning and ideology rather than on analyzing speech patterns or respondents’ emotions, I chose to

follow a specific de-naturalized approach advocated by Oliver, Serovich and Mason (2005), which is in turn based on the work of Fairclough (1993). This approach focuses on accurately capturing “the substance of the interview, that is, the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation”, rather than the intricacies of speech and emotion, as “the maneuverings of power are often captured in the content of the interview rather than in the mechanics of the conversation” (Oliver, Serovich and Mason, 2005, p. 1277-1278). However, in order to preserve some of the respondents’ emotional reactions, I did use notations to indicate displays such as humor anger and fear.

Following the completion the transcription process, I then coded the transcripts using ATLAS.ti qualitative data software. The transcripts for policy interviews (12 total) and Minot-based longer-term residents (18 total) were coded separately as the interview protocols for each group were significantly different and due to my desire to focus on policy themes with the former group and quality of life with the latter. Although I did not stick to one specific family of discourse analysis methods, my coding approach drew from several schools of thought, most of which privilege *a priori* (prior assumption) over *en vivo* (arising during textual analysis) coding. However, the over-riding similarity between these approaches was that they sought to examine how power is exercised and identities are formed through the strategic use of language and discourses.

Major inspiration came from Manuel Delanda’s conception of the assemblage. While assemblages and networks mean many things to many different scholars and have been used in various ways in human geography (Sheppard, 2008), Delanda’s approach focuses on examining the discourses that bind actants (the collective category of humans,

non-humans and objects) and institutions together into internally and externally coherent networks.[10] Although such codes may be interpreted differently by those in control of the network versus those outside of it, the general purpose of these codes is to craft a specific language that legitimates the existence of the network and helps spread its ideology (Delanda, 2006). An example can be found in Table 10 (p. 105), in which *a priori* codes and assumptions about actants I developed based on literature review and preliminary research have a specific meaning within the North Dakota's oil and gas policy community, but may not be shared by non-community members. These discourse/actant assumptions then formed the basis of interview prompts that could be used to test whether my assumptions about their meaning was correct. These tests were then used to structure specific ATLAS.ti codes that reflected the outcomes of these interviews. For example, using the growth discourse in the following table, can be found in the differing uses of this discourse between policy figures and "everyday" North Dakota residents: whereas policy figures largely confirmed my *a priori* definition of the concept (measuring development in terms of number of industry jobs, pipelines built and wells drilled), non-policy individuals viewed development quite differently (overall job growth, construction of civil infrastructure and increased provision of social services).

[10] Delanda refers to specific words or phrases imbued with particular meanings as codes. However, so as not to create confusion with the codes used in ATLAS.ti markup, Delandan "codes" will be referred to as "discourses."

Discourse/Actant	Role/Meaning	Prompt
Discourse		
Development/Growth	- Legitimizes political/ economic intervention - Positions the fossil fuel economy as the only legitimate option	- What does development mean for your city or organization?
Actant		
Industry	- Supportive of development -Connotes opposition to environmentalism - Connotes strong political influence	- Do you have overall positive or negative feelings about the oil and gas industry?

Table 10: Discourses and Codes

Another major influence on my coding approach was the general school known as critical discourse analysis (CDA). Although there are many disputes about what does and does not constitute CDA, it is generally viewed as an analytical approach inspired by the work of theorists such as Karl Marx and Michel Foucault that seeks to show how discourses function in society in regard to the exercise of power and control over culture (see Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000) for an extensive review). In addition to theories adapted from Fairclough (1993, 2013) on the hegemonic role of discourse in society (to be discussed in greater detail in 3.7.2), I also drew substantial inspiration from Tujn van Dijk (2004), who argues that knowledge, both personal and at the group level, is formed through the interplay between experience and discourse. The repetition of these discourses through face-to-face interaction leads to their acceptance and further dissemination among community members. Indeed, this notion is particularly important for helping to link Objectives 1, 2 and 3, as there are many discourses that cut across the texts analyzed, but are often employed in different ways by individuals depending on their various identities and locations. Building on these same themes, Gee (2014, 2017) has developed a toolkit for doing discourse analysis centered on the concept of discourse as an attempt to affirm or challenge assumed notions of practice, politics and identity. Although I do not directly follow Gee's coding method, his conception was particularly important for the coding of all 3 objectives, as each major group of respondents and/or editorial writers specifically sought to support or oppose the dominant pro-industry ideology (see Chapter 4).

In terms of the coding itself, I attempted to balance these *a priori* power-centric methods with what a "patterned meaning" approach, which allows for the development of

en vivo codes under the explicit acknowledgement that a researcher's own prior assumptions, research objectives and individual subjectivity help to determine which codes and themes are meaningful (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Indeed, while I attempted to remain as objective as possible when making these *en vivo* codes, I often found myself basing them on how they related to the main question I was trying to answer: How do individuals conceptualize and understand the fracking boom? An example of this in the coding comes from a specific anecdote about identity I heard from respondents of all stripes: North Dakota and North Dakotans are special. Several respondents also told me that the opposite held true: Those from outside the state, as well as their cultures, were therefore suspect. Once I began coding these interviews, I was cognizant of that fact, creating several *en vivo* codes that reflected the meaning of these types of statements in the text: "North Dakota exceptionalism", "the North Dakota Way/good government", "improvement of community values/quality of life" and "decline of community values/quality of life" and "Us v. them" for the policy interview set; "North Dakota native", "decline in moral/community values", "outsiders hurt culture" and "North Dakotans have better values" for the longer-term set. Indeed, these codes were used frequently for both sets, being used 74/487 (15.2%) times in the policy set and 32/364 (8.8%) in the longer-term set. Indeed, while there were other prominent codes in each set, these value judgment utterances defined the tone of both sets around the question of morality, which became the overarching organizational theme for both chapters 4 and 6.

However, not all *en vivo* codes were so intimately tied to *a priori* assumptions. One of the most surprising themes that began to emerge in the coding process was how policy individuals framed the success of the oil and gas industry as a reflection of the overall

“state of the state” of North Dakota. While some of these responses may have been more the result of playing to an intended audience or a reflection of the corporate messaging of respondents’ institutions (indeed, most of these respondents worked for the oil industry or on its behalf or as its regulators), this theme ran counter to many national media framings of North Dakota, by both national media and several respondents, as an isolated landscape that would not be worthy of outside attention if not for the existence of oil, “a bust with tumbleweeds” (personal interview). While I certainly expected some of these talking points from the policy respondents, I did not expect them to be as prominent as they were. To this effect, I created two specific codes to deal with the relationship between “boosterism” and “industry/government cooperation.” After I had finished assigning these codes to all of the policy documents, I began to notice a pattern: nearly all of the instances in which I assigned these two codes matched strongly with previously mentioned codes about fostering a positive North Dakotan identity, as well as being strongly tied to eliminating purportedly burdensome regulations on the oil industry in order to encourage growth. Indeed, in each of the 16 times the boosterism code was assigned to a passage, that passage was also assigned codes from the preceding paragraph about North Dakota values (exceptionalism, improving quality of life, etc.), a coincidence which also occurred in 6/16 passages the industry/government cooperation code was used (increasing to 6/11 passages if a technical interview with the state’s chief pipeline regulator is excluded). Thus, although these emerging patterns challenged my initial assumptions that the industry/government relationship was solely a transactional economic one designed to increase the profits and prestige of both parties, they helped to confirm the degree to which this cooperation was as much, if not more, a cultural project to repurpose North

Dakota's existing pro-industry identity, *Homo Dakoticus*, in order to support (or at least, not oppose) the oil and gas industry.

An example of yet another unexpected *en vivo* occurrence comes from the longer-term interview and focus group set. In 2011, Minot (where all of these interviews took place) experienced the worst flooding in city history (see Chapter 6). Although I was aware of this event and knew that it had been majorly disruptive to many city residents, I expected that the flood would have become a smaller topic of concern in the more than 4 years that had passed between it and the time that I began my interviews in fall 2015. However, this was by far the topic that respondents identified as Minot's number one issue, even above-and-beyond oil and gas concerns. As I discuss in detail in Chapter 6, respondents viewed the flood and its resulting devastation of the city's housing market as the precursor to many of the more recent oil-related housing struggles. Thus, the flood became a lynchpin event that held together many of the varied grievances that respondents held regarding development in the city. Indeed, in addition to housing, the flood (and its incomplete and uneven recovery) was seen as compounding other issues such as boom-related traffic increases, infrastructural woes and the city government's failure to develop Minot's downtown, which was the lowest-lying area of the city and site of greatest devastation. This flood/disorder synergy can also be demonstrated directly by analyzing the codes. Flooding was mentioned in 17/18 documents (94%) in the Minot set and was brought up without prompting in 9 of those interviews (53%). Indeed, I began asking people about the flood in later interviews as it became clear to me that this was the topic that respondents felt most passionate about. Additionally, flood-related codes

were coincident with housing-related codes in 13/28 cases (46%) whereas oil was only mentioned in 7/28 (25%) cases.

To summarize, while there are various approaches to coding that attempt to balance *a priori* and *en vivo* code creation, research for this dissertation largely privileged approaches that favored *a priori* reasoning. I wanted to focus thematically on power, ideology and identity, all of which are fundamental to *a priori*-centric methods rooted in CDA. However, as the above examples demonstrate, there were many instances where *en vivo* discoveries either directly contradicted *a priori* assumptions or revealed unexpected themes that ultimately became important organizational cornerstones of both ethnographic chapters in the dissertation.

3.7.2 Newspaper coding and analysis

As mentioned in section 3.6.2, the newspaper sample was focused on two major issues: Measure 5 (M5) and the Keystone XL (KXL) pipeline. The editorials in each of these subsamples were then divided further into one of three categories: 1.) a pro-industry viewpoint; 2.) an anti-industry viewpoint; and 3.) neutral or not taking a specific viewpoint. In practical terms a pro-industry viewpoint meant opposing M5 while supporting, whereas an anti-industry viewpoint meant the reverse. Given these pieces of information, it would have been easy to begin coding using *a priori* reasoning based on stereotypes about what a pro-industry or an anti-industry individual was expected to believe. However, given my previous experience coding policy interviews, I was aware that important, unexpected thematic details would be lost without allowing for the emergence of at least some *en vivo* codes. Thus, I chose to again use a loose patterned meaning approach (Braun and

Clarke, 2006), which would allow for a balance between *a priori* and *en vivo* codes. Indeed, this approach has already been used successfully in fracking-related newspaper analysis by Jaspal and Nerlich (2014). In their study of the national fracking debate in the UK, the authors created what they refer to as “superordinate themes”, or those that help to frame often diverging arguments under major thematic groupings that provide a coherent narrative superstructure. Based upon initial cursory readings that had already identified the general ideological viewpoint of each editorial, I assigned headings for each subsample that I used to group articles based on shared themes and the discursive work that these themes did for writers that employed them (See Table 11 and 12 (p. 112-113)).

Using this overarching *a priori* structure, I was then able to code each of the editorials *en vivo* while remaining cognizant of the over-arching ideological camps to which authors aligned (see Tables 13-16 (p.114-117) for the 5 most prominent codes assigned to each group). Indeed, using these superordinate themes as starting points for deeper exploration within the corresponding framework led to the emergence of unexpected subthemes that provided for a richer analysis that a sole *en vivo* or *a priori* one would have allowed. Building on Gee’s (2014) social languages tool, which argues that writers and speakers of content have self-fashioned identities which they consciously and unconsciously change when speaking to different groups of speakers in order to deliver messages with specific meanings beyond the literal meanings of their words.

Measure 5 Editorials		
Superordinate theme	**Discursive purpose**	**No. of editorials**
Farming	Created trusted expert subject position that lent extra legitimacy to those that employed it	61
Hunting/outdoor heritage	Created conservationist subject position that allowed one to support/oppose M5 on benefits/drawbacks to recreation	48
Property rights	Allowed for a M5 to be opposed by relating M5 to an unrelated wedge issue	40
Environmentalism	Allowed for M5 to be supported/opposed by connecting it to contentious national-level issue	32

Table 11: Measure 5 Superordinate Themes

Keystone XL Editorials		
Superordinate Theme	**Discursive Purpose**	**No. of editorials**
"Washington"/corruption	Connected KXL to reviled federal government and emblematic public supporters/opponents	37
Energy security	Allowed KXL to be supported/opposed on geopolitical grounds	33
Environmental risk	Allowed KXL to be supported/opposed on health and safety grounds	33

Table 12: Keystone XL Superordinate Themes

Most prominent codes for M5 supporting articles	
Code	**No. of occurrences**
Hunting (pro)	28
M5 is pro-farming	24
Environmentalism (pro)	12
Honors Theodore Roosevelt's conservation legacy	10
Measure is pro-private property	3

Table 13: M5 Supporting Article Codes

Most prominent codes for M5 opposing articles	
Code	**No. of occurrences**
Out-of-state takeover	50
M5 diverts money from other needs	44
M5 is anti-private property	40
M5 is anti-farming	37
Legislature, not referendum, should address conservation	28

Table 14: M5 Opposing Article Codes

Most prominent codes for KXL supporting articles	
Code	**No. of occurrences**
Pipelines safer than railroad/truck	19
Good for energy security	18
Obama (anti)	17
Bi-partisan project	14
No environmental risk	13

Table 15: KXL Supporting Article Codes

Most prominent codes for KXL opposing articles	
Code	**No. of occurrences**
Republicans/leaders corrupt	20
Environmental risk	20
KXL prelude to oil export	17
Bad for energy security	15
Will raise gas prices	11

Table 16: KXL Opposing Article Codes

Examples from the M5 subsample are provided by the hunting/outdoor heritage and farmer subjectivities that editorial writers assigned themselves. By rhetorically labeling themselves as either farmers, hunters and outdoorsmen, letter writers were able to take on subject positions that carry strong currency in a state that prides itself on its identity of homesteading and agrarian productivism. Thus, this heritage framework allowed for particularly effective emotional, rather than factual, appeals to be made, all of which made specific appeals to a nebulous "heritage" that was "at risk."

This notion of a mysterious, yet undeniable, existential threat to North Dakotans' collective identity led me to examine this heritage framing in relationship to an *en vivo* code that became the most used code in the entire M5 subset: "out-of-state takeover." Many M5 opponents specifically sought to cast the measure as a conspiracy created by non-Dakotans to destroy North Dakota's rural economy and environment out of jealousy of not having viable oil and gas resources. This framing, which was used by 50/93 (54%) of all anti-M5 writers became a common means to voice trope grievances against those from outside of the state, who were seen as implicitly not sharing the values that have promoted "stewardship" of North Dakota's rural environment (a specific word used frequently by "farmers" using the takeover framing). Thus, I decided to examine how frequently these heritage and takeover framings co-occurred, feeling that there must be a pattern. Indeed, the out-of-state takeover discourse frequently overlapped with the pro-hunting and anti-farming heritage discourses, co-occurring 11/50 times (22%) with the former, 25/50 times (50%) with the latter and having a tri-occurrence 8/50 times (16%).

The overlapping themes identified by this pattern analysis became the bedrock of the arguments I advanced in Chapter 5.2.

Another example of the benefits of this framework approach can be found in the KXL subsample. As mentioned in Table B, the environmental risk framing became a way for both supporters and opponents of KXL to argue their position by framing themselves as caring about the environment. While the connection between this discourse and pipeline opponents is self-evident (an oil leak would cause contamination), the connection between it and the KXL opponents was less obvious as environmentalism is generally a concept that supporters of the oil industry have been hostile to and most KXL supportive writers were eager to argue how unlikely a pipeline accident would be. However, much as with our previous case, a closer examination of code co-occurrence can help to shed light on the purpose this discourse serves.

One of the major *en vivo* codes that was assigned to KXL opponents was “Obama (anti)”, as many directly blamed the former president for preventing KXL’s construction. Indeed, 17/47 opponents (36%) directly expressed opposition to Obama and his policies regarding the pipeline. This code frequently co-occurred with the code for “no environmental risk”, being mentioned in 5/13 (38%) editorials using the environmental risk framing. Additionally, many of the passages where these overlapping editorials specifically sought to show that the Obama Administration was deliberately stymying KXL despite being aware of how few safety and environmental issues were involved. This led me to believe that the debate over KXL was not so much about the pipeline itself, but yet another issue that had become a test of partisan loyalty. Evidence for this theory was born out through a co-occurrence check on articles from the anti-KXL set for the codes

“environmental risk” and the three related codes “Obama (pro)”, “Republicans/leaders corrupt” and “Heitkamp is a sellout” (in reference to North Dakota’s Democratic U.S. Senator being a strong public supporter of KXL), which showed that these partisan codes were used in 11/20 cases (55%) in which KXL opponents employed the environmental risk framing. Thus, it became clear to me that KXL had become yet another oil-related proxy issue through which deeper debates about North Dakota’s political, cultural and environmental values could be had. This proxy issue framing is of fundamental importance to the argument advanced in chapter 5 that the fight over KXL was more over the future of North Dakota than about pipelines, property or the environment. Indeed, the patterns discovered in the coding of these KXL articles helped me to understand how the debate over a pipeline that neither traverses North Dakota, nor carries a significant amount of Bakken crude, became one of the most hotly debate topics in local newspapers for a period of over 5 years.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter examined the research process for the dissertation. The overarching objective of the dissertation was to examine how North Dakota residents have understood and experienced the Bakken oil boom and how discourses about the boom have mediated these experiences. Purposive sampling focused on two groups: elite policy actors directly connected to the oil and gas sector and non-elite, longer-term residents of Minot, a Bakken boomtown. Methods included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and participant observation at industry and activist conferences. Newspaper editorials in North Dakota-based newspapers, sampled through a regime that identified coverage of

key oil and gas related events, were examined using content analysis methods strongly inspired by CDA. All of the resulting text (including transcription of ethnographic data and editorials from 4 newspapers) were coded and analyzed in ATLAS.ti software using an approach that was influenced by CDA and “patterned meaning” coding.

This chapter also introduced several key concepts that provide the foundation of the dissertation’s substantive analytical chapters (Chapter 4-6), including the role of values in structuring respondents experiences of the oil boom as well as how certain apparently innocuous debates (such as the struggles over M5 and KXL) were proxies for debates over cultural meaning and group identity. Additionally, this chapter sought to reflect critically on issues such as positionality and researcher and respondent relationships. Trust played an integral role in conducting interviews and focus groups with purposively sampled respondents.

4. HOMO DAKOTICUS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the concept of the *Homo Energeticus*, a subject who builds their identity around the consumption of fossil fuels. As such high-consumption lifestyles are so prevalent within Western capitalism, many individuals unconsciously adopt this identity without realizing they are doing so. It is posited that elites are then able to appeal to these individuals to find support for policies that further entrench existing energy policies. Building on these findings, this chapter introduce a new Bakken-specific variant of the *Homo Energeticus*, the *Homo Dakoticus*. This chapter then examines discourses used by oil and gas and political elites to help promote such an identity among North Dakota residents. It is argued that elites attempt to graft support for the oil industry onto existing prevalent ideologies that support free-market capitalism, consensus-based politics and patriotism.

4.2 Homo Dakoticus

One of the principal reasons that fracking has become an integral part of the political and economic landscape in North Dakota is through concerted efforts by the oil and gas industry, state and local governments and various boosters to foster positive images of fracking-related development among the state's population. Indeed, such a strategy is common in energy landscapes beyond the Bakken, with attempts to replicate pro-industry and pro-energy subjectivities among populations referred to separately by Arthur Mason and Randolph Haluza-Delay as the creation of the *Homo Energeticus*.

Mason's (2013) conception of the *Homo Energeticus* is of an individual who consciously fashions their identity around the conspicuous consumption of fossil fuels, with higher levels of consumption providing the illusion of high social standing and moral superiority, regardless of one's actual class position or behavior: "Through elaborate energy expenditures, today's high-energy consumer achieves an equivalency with the morality of the aristocrat whose elaborate cultivation of outward appearance served as an instrument of social differentiation and the display of rank through outward form" (3). Indeed, such is the need among post-WWII Americans to maintain this façade of carboniferous opulence, that all reductions in fossil fuel use and emissions must be, "about production and not consumption" (3).

Haluza-Delay's *Energeticus*, while also tied to consumption, places individual behavior toward energy within more explicit discourses of nationalism and capitalist development. Kowalsky and Haluza-Delay (2013) argue that the rhetoric of the Alberta government seeks to make tar sands development the default position by presenting it as, "necessary, socially naturalized and thus immune to any criticism other than technological fine tuning", echoing many classic post-political arguments about the nature of environmental governance. This not only shuts down debate, but also forces Albertan society to support the government's position as part of normal good citizenship: "the Alberta tar sands are developed such that Albertan society has to conform to the demands put on it by mining operations, and that human beings are fitted to the demands of the tar sands rather than the inverse" (162). The ways in which the collective apparatus of the Albertan government, energy industry and pro-oil civil society groups "interpellates Albertans" within a "common sense" identity that is centrally-defined around unwavering

support to the tar sands has led Haluza-Delay (2012) to argue that *Homo Energeticus* has morphed into the more nationalist-centered *Homo Alberticus*. Indeed, this conception of an industry-state nexus seeking to control and define debate is highly reminiscent of the situation in the Bakken, hence this chapter will seek to define these efforts as the creation of *Homo Dakoticus*.

4.3 Key themes for the creation of *Homo Dakoticus*

Creating pro-energy subjectivity, as mentioned in the literature review, is as much about demarcating appropriate behaviors as it is about direct coercion. In a stable, homogenous sociopolitical climate such as North Dakota where civility reigns, logical and emotional appeals are particularly important, especially when it comes to nurturing a supposed personal connection between residents and the energy industry. As such, boosters frequently rely on several key themes to foster this sense of belonging among citizens, often seeking to flatter residents about their particular role in making sure the Bakken is a successful project. The three major themes, which overlap significantly, are: The North Dakota Way, North Dakota Exceptionalism and Resiliency. Each of these themes, which will be developed in detail in the following sections, seek to inculcate a sense of personal mission among Dakotans as an integral part not only of their state and local communities, but as players in national and international affairs.

4.3.1 The North Dakota Way

North Dakota is rarely the first, and often the last, state that comes to mind in popular and scholarly discussions about the United States. Among the state's populace,

this often manifests as a perceived slighting of the state relative to others and the notion that North Dakotans must support one another as they believe that any relief from outside influences, be they corporations or the federal government, is both unlikely and undesired. Indeed, there is often strong, reflexive distrust of those from outside of North Dakota who claim to have solutions for the state's problems, either real or imagined. This distrust is a core component of the so-called "North Dakota Way", an oft-invoked, yet rarely-defined code of behavior for "native" White North Dakotans to follow. The core tenets of the Way, although not universally agreed upon, are typically said to include the following:

> 1. Placing the interests of one's community and one's state above one's own.
> 2. Being an unquestionably loyal American patriot as a matter of principle, rather than for selfish purposes.
> 3. Working hard and not complaining about one's circumstances, because they could always be worse.
> 4. Being excessively polite and hospitable, as one must behave in the way one wishes to be treated, especially if they expect assistance from their community in the future.
> 4. Favoring "common sense", tried-and-true approaches over ideological ones.
> 5. Taking pleasure in simple, uncomplicated ways of living that emphasize faith, family and home over decadent, urban, outsider culture (Ms. C, 2016).

Despite these tenets potentially opening up the possibility of government intervention, community, state and nation are seen entities often divorced from politics, thus liberalism and socialism are often seen as counter to the Way. As such, Dakota culture can be viewed as being stubborn, insular and averse to any changes, even if they could benefit individuals or the community without radically altering their character. However, more often the Way is invoked positively as separating North Dakota from the

perceived failures of the rest of the United States and certainly other countries. The leaders in the state Republican Party, which has completely dominated government at all levels in North Dakota since the 1930s, have specifically championed the Way of late as an antidote to Democratic attempts to foster growth in the wake of the Great Recession. During his successful 2010 campaign for the state's lone seat in the U.S. House, longtime Republican state senate majority leader Rick Berg specifically invoked the Way to demonize nine-term Democratic incumbent Earl Pomeroy as out of touch: "There's a Washington way and a North Dakota way and that's what our campaign is about. I believe that Washington can learn a lot about the way we do things here in North Dakota" (Herald News Service, 2010).

However, some have been more critical of this invocation of the Way, arguing that it is often used to bully critics of conservative, pro-business policy into silence, particularly when it comes to the regulatory capture of elected officials and bureaucrats by the energy industry. Democratic Party chair and state Rep. Kylie Oversen has argued that her Republican colleagues have given precedence to the financial needs of the oil and gas industry over those of average citizens, arguing that, "that is not the North Dakota way and not the way we do business in our state" (Oversen, 2013). Similarly, the editorial board of the conservative Fargo Forum, the state's largest newspaper, has argued that oil and gas donations have clouded the judgment of North Dakota politicians: "embrace of big bucks from oil and gas executives doesn't seem to comport with the much-ballyhooed ethical foundation of "the North Dakota way." Or does it? And if it does, North Dakota is no different than anyplace else" (Forum News Service, 2012). More recent

scandals in the oil patch have led the Forum to declare that invocation of the Way to trumpet the status quo is, “a cynical joke” (Forum News Service, 2014).

Yet despite these public denunciations of the Way, its influence remains strong among the general population and is frequently invoked by those seeking to defend and/or promote the oil and gas industry and the way it has partnered with state and local governments. At the 2016 Williston Basin Petroleum Conference, the primary meet-and-greet for regulators, elected officials and industry personnel, then-Lt. Gov. Drew Wrigley held a roundtable discussion with two prominent Bakken industry players, Jim Arthaud of oilfield-service company Behm Energy and Ernie Graham of Graham Development, one of the oil patch’s key real estate developers. Both men praised the role of state and local government in creating a pro-business, anti-regulatory climate for oil and gas corporations and partner industries. While such responses would be expected at business conferences of all stripes, the two specifically argued that such industry-government cooperation was emblematic of the common sense values inherent among North Dakotans. In arguing for the continued importance of investing in the oil patch during the downturn, Graham was particularly effusive in his praise:

> I’d like to thank the local and state government of North Dakota. I’ve been coming here for about 6-7 years. I lived here for 3 years. My son lives in Minot. Williston, the epicenter of the OG business in North Dakota, bears no resemblance to the city I saw 6 years ago. The infrastructure is much better. Better roads. Schools. Hospitals. Housing. Hotels. There’s a fantastic community center there. A new airport’s coming. It’s going to be a great place to live, if it isn’t already a great place to live. What should the state government do to keep the ball rolling? If I had 1 suggestion, I would say, continue on with what you are doing (personal recording).

Similarly, Arthaud, who touts his lifelong association with the small, oil patch town of Belfield, believes that the conservative, slow growth culture of rural North Dakota will be its major advantage in recovering from the slowdown:

> I think we can say we're in great shape to take advantage of the recovery. We have great infrastructure. We have great schools. We have great pipelines. We've got water. We've got ambulances. Fire trucks. Hospitals. I tell you, I think North Dakota and its leaders have just done a fabulous job over the last 10 years. There were times on the county commission where we thought we couldn't get it fast enough. But when you look back at it, they did a fabulous job. So, I think the state's done good. I think they need to steer the course and keep up with those investments (personal recording).

Indeed, under this invocation of "the Way" the people of North Dakota and their ability to prioritize the needs of the oil industry over those of their community is seen as essential to making sure that the state remains prosperous under the current economic model.

The Way has always taken on somewhat of a mystical quality and is used to hagiographically explain how North Dakota broke free of outside influences during its early period. As John MacMartin, director of the Minot Area Chamber of Commerce argues, it was this desire for economic independence among the nascent Non-Partisan League (the forebears of the state's contemporary Democratic party, although in its early years ideological adherents crossed party lines) that led to the end of the state's dependence on the Minneapolis grain cartel:

> If you go back to our populist history, the reason we've got the Mill and Elevator in Grand Forks or the Bank of North Dakota is that folks really believed that they were being strangled by Minneapolis. General Mills was in Minneapolis. You sent your raw grain to Minneapolis. They ground it and they added something to it that added more value and they could keep the price really low. So, they farmers never really made a lot of money. By creating a mill and elevator that the State owned, the farmers had the

> opportunity to send their grain someplace else, and perhaps get a little bit more money than somewhere else since that mill was run differently than it would have been in other places" (personal recording).

MacMartin uses this example to promote the state's current efforts to rapidly expand their road, rail, pipeline and processing industries in support of both the oil and agriculture industries: "Most of those cycles have since been broken … and we're now looking for things we can do better with our own products … to stabilize and survive some of the ups and downs better … it's going to make our economy more solid." This supposed radical independence of North Dakotans is, according to conservative Christian talk show host Scott Hennen, what allows them to persevere in the face of national media "myths" about how they are being forced by the oil industry to accept growth that can only be brought about through, "the raping and pillaging of the landscape": "Given all the negative coverage, you'd be surprised at how positive people are. They just keep plowing along and doing what they want to do." Hennen argues that these perpetual falsehoods have driven the near total blackout of national reporters by local governments in Western North Dakota and given him, a lifelong Dakotan, unique inside access to local goings on through his popular human interest radio program *What's on Your Mind?* and its companion website *Voices of Watford*[11]:

> I'm just trying to be the voice of the industry and the voice of the people and to take out the middle man and tell it like it is. I'm trying to tell it the way it is for people who are actually there and give people from outside of the West

[11] A former reporter for the Minot Daily News, who wishes to remain anonymous, told this researcher that the reason newspapers would refuse to talk to me was because they thought I would either steal their local stories or use information gained to slander Western North Dakota.

> who don't understand it a frame of reference, not just use a quote here and there for window dressing" (personal recording).

This mistrust of outsiders and anger over perceived misrepresentation is also used to justify the state's, and by extension its rural residents', rejection of both environmentalism and other "liberal, big government" political economic interventions in order to fix some of the boom's ills. Tessa Sandstrom, the public relations manager for the North Dakota Petroleum Council (NDPC), the industry's lobbying arm within the state, argues that North Dakotans are proud of their communities and the prosperity that the boom has brought them, even if there may be some social downsides:

> Yes, we need to do a better job educating the public about what the industry is doing to clean up spills and improve communities, but the national media isn't helping us. They always portray North Dakota as a bust with tumbleweeds whereas local papers are always showing the vitality of the Bakken. That's kind of an illusion that Western North Dakota is a disaster, but I'm from Western North Dakota and I go back every weekend, and that's just not the case (personal recording).

This pride and community cohesiveness is, according to Sandstrom, also why the majority of residents support the "cozy relationship" between industry and state and local governments and generally tend to oppose environmentalist, "keep-it-in-the ground type of groups" such as the Dakota Resource Council (DRC) and the Sierra Club, whom Sandstrom argues reject the maintenance of a "positive business environment for development" in favor of "stopping all oil development in general." The environmentalists' behavior contrasts strongly with that of "property rights" groups such as the North Dakota Association of Oil and Gas Producing Counties (NDAOGPC) and the Northwest Landowners' Association (NWLOA) who appreciate the intimate connections between

citizens and business that North Dakota's small size allows: "We can actually come together for bipartisan solutions" that "encourage continued development of all our resources." This theme of constructive engagement between industry and certain citizens is echoed by NDPC president Ron Ness, who has similar disdain for DRC and Sierra Club:

> You know, they frankly don't carry any weight in North Dakota whatsoever. They are not viewed as credible. Essentially the North Dakota attitude is that you need to be willing to be at the table and be part of the discussion and find reasonable, common-sense approaches. If you don't bring that to the table, then you don't get a seat at the table. Now, other groups like Northwest Landowners, they came to take the path that we should work together to find things that we want changed. And we've had tremendous success making changes on things that are important to them. Those are the real people who farm and ranch up in those communities and who understand and value energy production. They're not just obstructionists or people who have made environmentalism an occupation, rather than a passion. For others it's become an occupation and an economic driver for them to be obstructionists (personal interview).

Indeed, such rhetoric reinforces the notion that "real" North Dakotans are somehow different from those who would seek to undermine the oil industry, even in the face of potential disaster, a theme Ness seeks to prove with his relaying of the story of Steve Jensen. In September 2013, nearly 860,000 gallons of oil spilled from a Tesoro pipeline on Jensen's ranch near Tioga, midway between the hub cities of Williston and Minot. While spills such as this are "tragic in their own way", Ness argues that the Jensens are good North Dakotans who are willing to make personal sacrifices for the greater good: "They're typical North Dakotans who want their land cleaned up. They're reasonable. They probably bake pie for the workers who are out there. In the scheme of the whole thing it's a very small part of what you might think of Downtown Houston or something.

It's only the equivalent of 1 block. It'll get cleaned up and the Jensen family will champion the effort." Although the pie baking anecdote is rooted in truth, in interviews with the press, the Jensens have been a bit less bullish on the cleanup effort, with Don Morrison of the DRC arguing that the Jensens don't speak out for fear of being ostracized or damaging their communities. Jensen himself has somewhat concurred with this, noting that he remains as hospitable as possible in order to keep the peace: "When people ask you about it, you don't dwell on it. You just keep it short and simple" (Bryan, 2014).

As is the case with many of the above examples, invocation of "the Way" can be viewed not as promoting community values, but as wielding their abstract notion in order to prop up a divisive status quo that is often of greater benefit to the industry and its boosters than many average North Dakotans. While this is at times accomplished directly among politicians by invoking "the Way" in order to counter anti-boosterist rhetoric, "the Way" also draws on the strong culture of silence and consensus that is pervasive in Western North Dakota's small towns, where anti-oil-by-rail activist Ron Schalow argues that the pro-industry status quo reigns because, "people just go along to get along" (personal interview). Thus, while official appeals to tenets of "the Way" in support of boosterism can only reach so many, fear among the populace of being the one to break standards of decorum often leads to a vicious cycle of residents policing other community members and censoring their own speech. The effect of marshalling "the Way" to support pro-industry rationality is that dissenting views are not only suppressed, but also painted as entirely without merit for consideration by "real" North Dakotans. Although some prominent voices in state government or media may occasionally speak out, the effect of such interventions often has little effect on the overall debate. In fact, such interventions

are often criticized by boosters as an example of doing exactly what dissenters claim to oppose: violating “the Way.”

4.3.2 North Dakota exceptionalism

One of the major talking points among pro-industry boosters has been the supposed exceptionalism of North Dakota, both within a national and international context. This line of thinking has been particularly strong during the most recent oil boom due to the industry’s perceived protective influence over North Dakota during a time when many states, as well as other countries, are struggling economically in the wake of the Great Recession. While touting the economic benefits makes good sense from a purely commercial standpoint, this exceptionalism is often said to stem not solely from sound economic and political decision making, but also from the strong moral character, intelligence and work ethic of North Dakotans. Rep. Andrew Maragos (R-Minot) is an especially strong proponent of the virtuous citizen model, arguing that the state’s residents have defined its exceptional reputation since the state’s inception:

> We keep a strong higher education system. I’ve always marveled at how our forefathers understood how important access was … Our two universities, especially at Fargo [North Dakota State] … were turning out such quality students. When they were done being educated, they could go anywhere they wanted. And I believe other states always targeted North Dakota for several reasons. They knew if they hired us, we had good work ethic, we had good common sense, we were morally centered. I remember even when I was in Vietnam, I said, “If you get anybody from North Dakota, I get first crack at them. I want those people.” Because I knew what they were capable of. And I think the other states knew it, too … I don’t know of anybody that graduates from our colleges that couldn’t get a job right away” (personal interview).

Indeed, under this model, North Dakota is positioned as doubly blessed with both a strong citizenry and abundant energy and agricultural resources, each of which are the envy of groups as varied as foreign government officials, energy executives and American workers. Ron Ness of the NDPC has argued that fracking and related technologies have helped make North Dakota a global leader in integrating responsible oil and gas development within an existing agro-resource landscape:

> I think that the untold story is that the Bakken is almost a revolutionary way of energy development in terms of the ability to extract oil and gas from very large areas with a very small footprint. If you think of other fields across the world that produce 1 million barrels/day, you have an oilfield. But here you have agriculture with oil on it. So, it's a very miniscule footprint on the landscape, but yet we're able to extract huge amounts of oil underneath with the technology … the real news is the fact that we've changed the energy mix of the world. We've changed the geopolitics of the world. We've uncracked a method for extracting oil from a shale resource that's present in many areas of the world and that's going to change our energy future.

However, as Paul Lucy, Director of the Economic Development and Finance Division of the North Dakota Department of Commerce, has argued, while the industry has been one of the main things keeping North Dakota afloat, the economic growth it has produced has fueled, in combination with good decision making, the diversification of the economy and the state's relative stability in the face of crisis:

> As people look at North Dakota, they think that the oil and gas development over the last 8-9 years was a lifesaver for the state, but people really don't realize that while the rest of the country was going through a recession, North Dakota was experiencing growth. We were the only state in the nation with a growing economy as everyone else was seeing losses. And that was the result of some very concerted efforts to diversify the economy (personal interview).

This diversification, the natural outcome of “common sense” policymaking promoted under the North Dakota Way, is what has truly allowed North Dakota’s economic and human potential to serve as an example of how to recover from recession. Lucy has argued that despite oil and gas employment declining due to the recent drop in prices, the overall economy remains strong due to the growth of North Dakota as a place to find employment of all types, particularly the service industry. Maragos has argued that this was an intentional outcome of shrewd policymaking which enticed families, rather than solely single men and women, to move to the state: “We became very business friendly. And business loves friendly! … I was very supportive of the amendments to put seed money … to strategically invest in helping areas succeed in creating those jobs and giving people that idea, ‘Boy! I can get a good job in North Dakota. And I can have a good quality of life.’” However, Maragos also noted that incentives to create high paying jobs and affordable housing were necessary due to a lack of amenities that would otherwise draw people to North Dakota.

Yet despite this supposed lack of either big city cultural or traditional Western amenities such as hiking or skiing, several interviewees for this project argued that it was the friendly and genuine attitude of North Dakota government and residents that has been the largest factor in improving the state’s outside reputation and attracting new visitors, businesses and workers. Lucy’s Commerce Department colleague, Sara Coleman, Director of the Tourism Division, notes that the state government has invested heavily in its North Dakota Legendary ® campaign, which seeks to rebrand North Dakota as a lifestyle destination with friendly people interested in diverse community-based outdoor

and consumptive experiences. Coleman argues that despite lacking many typical amenities, the goal is to create memorable experiences that can only be had in North Dakota:

> Outdoor is what drives most of our travel, most of our visitors come for an outdoor experience. That doesn't necessarily mean that it's just hiking and mountain biking and doing horsebacking trails and hunting and fishing and birding … we really talk about those, but also round them off with the cultural experiences … the wineries and the microbrews and the culinary scene that's starting to boom like it is everywhere else as well as all of the other traveler amenities and niche interests that people have … We just talk about our unique advantages. We've got the same challenges that some other states have. We don't have the Grand Canyon, but we do have a lot of authentic experiences and I think that's what really drives people to the state. We don't give them a manufactured experience like you're going to have in Vegas or Orlando. We're the anti of that (personal interview).

It is this authenticity and supposed substance, rather than the superficiality of more cosmopolitan and/or developed parts of the country, that marks North Dakota as an exceptional place not only for resource development, but as a place to seek out the supposed "real America" that is being steadily eroded by a culture that de-emphasizes many of the community-centered values, such as those emphasized in The North Dakota Way, that are held dear by Dakotans. It is this sense of closeness and community values that other interviewees argue is the catalyst for making North Dakota a competitive state in the long term, with oil and gas playing an outsized role in creating the foundation for prosperous cities and towns with high paying jobs. John MacMartin of the Minot Area Chamber of Commerce argues that in particular, the focus needs to be on creating high paying, permanent jobs within the oil industry such as well and pipeline maintenance, as

well as focusing on “job attraction” by raising the typically low salaries for other skilled positions, which have in the past caused both talented North Dakotans and outsiders to overlook North Dakota as a place to settle and work. Indeed, several interviewees argue that providing high paying jobs for those with North Dakota roots will lead to a long-term revitalization of the state, as these individuals will be motivated to return home from big cities in other states in order to experience the positive values that set North Dakota apart. Scott Hennen of *What’s on Your Mind?* argues that North Dakota communities are special precisely because of the pride residents take in living there, noting that despite challenges posed by oil and gas development, “the worst day in Watford [City] is the worst day in Dallas or Minneapolis,” a sentiment echoed by Coleman:

> It’s like home, you always want to go back. So, it’s about expanding those lifestyle opportunities that people expect. … We just need to tell them about what we have, the jobs, but then also that we aren’t isolated. That you can still fly to anywhere you want to out of here and that you’re not going to be starved to death. We’ve got great restaurants and all these other amenities and kind of packaging that lifestyle to appeal to the young families that we really need is what we’ve got to do (personal interview).

Ness of the NDPC takes this line of reasoning a step further, arguing that North Dakota not only has exceptional people with exceptional values, but its embrace of oil and gas-related growth as a way to lure former and first time educated individuals has provided the successful blueprint for stemming the decline of “real America”:

> The Bakken is an incredible story of almost a melting pot of the country and the world into a very rural, very White, Norwegian community that has adopted people from all over. It’s become a tremendous place to start fresh, whether they were run down in the financial crisis and they came here. It’s a tremendous wage opportunity and a tremendous opportunity to restart your life. The biggest story from a North Dakota standpoint, is that this is the repopulation of rural America, which we’ve tried to figure out for

> decades. We've been losing our kids. We're losing our best and our brightest to Denver and Minneapolis. We never could find a mechanism to get them back. Life on the farm had changed and it was not the life they wanted. You now are seeing a revitalization of rural America and we're showing that if you have good jobs and you pay good wages and you created good opportunities for people, they will come. And they have (personal interview).

Thus, with statements such as Ness', the goal of appeals to exceptionalism are quite clear: there is a right way and a wrong way to be a North Dakotan, and the right way means fully accepting the oil and gas industry and the conservative community values that underpin its expansion. Indeed, much of this boosterist rhetoric reflects the nationalistic and conformist tenets of the Way. While critics of the oil and gas industry, as well as Dakota outsiders, may argue that over-reliance on specific tropes leads to insularity, isolation and potential backwardness in a state that has long struggled to overcome such stereotypes, boosters argue that it is precisely because of North Dakota's persistence in continuously defending supposedly contrarian, "traditional" values that the state and its people are exceptional. Thus, while narratives that North Dakota has "changed the geopolitics of the world" and is leading "the revitalization of rural America" may smack of hubris, they fit entirely within a worldview that prizes relentless devotion to small-town boosterism that is uniformly pro-business and anti-Washington and thus find a ready audience in policymakers and many ordinary North Dakotans. As we will see in our next section on resilience, this stick-to-itiveness in the face of internal and external challenges is seen as inherent in crafting a good energy citizen.

4.3.3 Resiliency

One of the supposed truths underlying the Way is the notion that North Dakotans are somehow more robust, harder working and engage in less questioning and complaining in the face of obstacles than urbanized outsiders. Much of this mythology is derived from notions that contemporary Dakotans prairie-homesteading ancestors were toughened physically, mentally and spiritually by the difficulties in eking out an existence in an unforgiving landscape cut off from extended family and mainstream American society and comforts.[12] These notions of innate toughness among North Dakotans have only been further reinforced during the most recent downturn in oil and gas prices, with many boosters, particularly the NDPC, strongly promoting the idea of "Bakken Strong," a riff on the popular post-marathon bombing slogan of "Boston Strong." Although the Bakken has not, like Boston, suffered at the hands of terrorists, the strength of those in the Bakken comes from a different kind of suffering: the Great Recession. Much of the ideological underpinning of Bakken Strong relies on examples of downtrodden workers using oil-related growth to reinvent themselves in the wake of devastation in traditional masculine, blue-collar sectors (Spiess, 2014). Indeed, Bakken Strong plays heavily on both the prairie toughening myth as well as notions that North Dakota values, especially those that favor strong traditionalist conservative ways of life and economy, help foster

[12] This is an often-used theme in much prairie literature by the likes of authors such as Laura Ingalls Wilder, Willa Cather and Ole Rolvaag among others. Rolvaag's *Giants in the Earth*, a story of Norwegian immigrants to the Dakota Territory, is frequently referenced, particularly by older North Dakotans, as a seminal influence during their early years as it was almost universally read in primary schools. Olson (1981) argues that this style of the building up of the plains as a monumental event is a foundational myth on the order of older Germanic and Scandinavian legends of conquest.

Dakota prosperity while other parts of the country underperform. Thus, the message behind Bakken Strong is clear: North Dakota, and by extension the Bakken, will survive and be reinvigorated, because Dakotans always find a way to survive and reinvigorate, no matter whether they face poor harvests or flagging global energy markets.

Resiliency and good old-fashioned Dakota toughness were on full display during the roundtable featuring Lt. Gov. Wrigley, Arthaud and Graham. Given their long-term experience in multiple oil plays and business environments, Arthaud and Graham were asked to specifically address investment strategies during the downturn, the major theme emerging being “don’t quit.” In typical fashion (see above section on “the Way), Graham, who has been involved in many real estate ventures beyond oil, provided a particularly colorful anecdote about overcoming depression during a previous period of economic stagnation, the mid 1970s:

> During the terrible recession of 1974-1975, I was dejectedly walking on California St. in the Financial District of San Francisco, just kind of wandering around actually wondering how I was going to survive. I’d just started having kids and times were tough. I looked in a shop window and there was a poster of a cat. The cat was hanging on by the tips of its fingernails on its front two paws. It was 15 stories above the ground, looking kind of wild-eyed at the camera. The caption was, ‘Hang in there, baby!’ I think that’s what we’re looking at and what we have been looking at for a year and a half. So, we might have a little bit more to go. But, if I would give anybody any advice as to how to get through a recession, it’s hang in there. The key to surviving a recession, assuming you have good, well-positioned assets in Western North Dakota, like I said, it’s just hang in there. Don’t leave! A lot of people bail when times get tough (personal recording).

Such a story not only reinforces typical Dakota notions about not folding under strain, but also seeks to show that such perseverance is both natural and expected. Implicit in such exhortations about the need for “good, well-positioned assets” is the idea that smart

Dakotans will prepare themselves for downturns so that they can survive when they get there. While not bailing may seem to be a simple answer to how to dealing with any difficult situation, Graham seeks to show that one should not bail on a place like Dakota because it, and its residents, are inherently special and sticking it out allows one to prosper in ways that one could not anywhere else:

> Remember why you came to North Dakota in the first place. The world needs oil and gas. We have a lot of it … Make sure your asset business or service is one of the best in your area. It's very, very important to always be one of the very best. We're all in the recession boat. People will remember businesses that run smoothly during the downturn … hang in there and you will reap the benefits of the inevitable comeback (personal recording).

This idea of renewal in a special place was echoed by Arthaud, who argued that such lean times offer the chance to cheaply reinvest, rebuild and acquire new assets, including local employees, which others with weaker temperaments have abandoned:

> Every down cycle provides an opportunity to invest. You just have to be patient … You have to be able to react and make the investments that you feel good about making. You can't make those decisions and those investments without the people you have around you. So, our team is my biggest asset that I have. Anybody can buy equipment. Anybody can buy a truck. Anybody can buy a workover rig. But, it's the people that you have around you that actually allow you to survive this (personal recording).

Indeed, implicit in this argument is that "the people that you have around you" are determined, optimistic, hard-working, pro-industry North Dakotans (or transplants), who have the will to remain in the Bakken when others seek to leave due to potential uncertainty. When Graham interjected that such individuals do not possess the requisite "mental toughness", Wrigley was quick to point out that Dakotans were able to whether difficulties and were absolutely not members of the aforementioned category: "North

Dakotans are pretty tough. We've been through these cycles before and been through the ups and downs … oil booms have come and gone. And we've lived through them." A similar opinion was expressed separately from this forum by the NDPC's Ron Ness: "We've been through the cycles of industry … related to oil and gas in North Dakota, the region and the country and here we are! We've been through the Bakken and we're still here" (personal interview). Along with this mere survival, Ness, much like Graham and Arthaud, argued that through each successive downturn, the NDPC and its industry partners and their workforce have emerged stronger, more efficient and ready to take the best advantage of the good times. Thus, just as tough prairie winters can be prepared for, so too can oil and gas downturns through improvement of one's key assets, thus allowing one to remain "mentally tough" and hold on until "spring."

Fetishizing toughness, then, not only serves to flatter North Dakotans and reinforce the stereotypes that they are naturally superior to outsiders, but also serves to bolster the argument that people's strong support for the oil and gas industry and concerted efforts to support will consistently pay dividends. Although these dividends may not immediately be visible, especially given the economic devastation that the downturn has caused for cash-strapped oil patch residents and governments, such appeals seek to reassure residents that the hardships they bear are necessary in order to eventually receive reward. Indeed, Graham lays this bare on multiple occasions buy repeating his slogan, "Don't bail on the Bakken!", arguing that this region will recover not only due to its excellent place in the market, but also its exceptional residents. Graham even goes so far as to argue that, "I don't think it's even rational to think that Western North Dakota won't come back." Thus, being a naysayer towards the industry makes one not only weak,

but also wrongheaded, labels individuals would want to steer clear of in a culture which prides itself on traditional, masculine fortitude and “common sense”, pro-growth decision making.

4.4 Chapter summary

The creation of the *Homo Energeticus* requires fostering among the target population a sense of duty to the industry and its governors, as well as making the outcomes of those relationships seem both natural and desirable. Implicit in such arguments is that energy development becomes a project that is bigger than the thoughts and needs of any single person, but a collective effort that requires a certain amount of personal sacrifice in order to make the project a success. All of these tropes are present in normalization and boosting efforts by the state, the industry and their partners in North Dakota, where existing moral codes such as “The North Dakota Way” can be marshalled in order to demonstrate the necessity of the industry to a public already sympathetic to pro-business ways of thinking and doing. Thus, in many ways, there is already a dormant *Dakoticus* within each and every Dakotan waiting to be awakened.

However, despite the potential ease of building the foundations for such a pro-industry subjectivity, the reality is that constant appeals and assurances must be made in order to maintain the “common sense” mindset and behavior necessary to weaponize the *Dakoticus* against its perceived enemies. Indeed, during the present downturn in oil prices when social and economic ills rear their heads in oil patch communities, the need for such cajoling is greater than ever. Thus, falling back on founding and more recent myths about

the goodness, toughness and uniqueness of North Dakota's mineral landscape and its people plays a major role in demonstrating the righteousness of continuing to support the oil industry despite the potential suffering that one may have to bear at both the personal and community level.

5. BAKKEN NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes editorials and letters to the editor (LTEs) (n = 271) published in 5 North Dakota newspapers between August 1, 2011 and July 31, 2016. Focusing on Measure 5 (a North Dakota ballot initiative targeting spending of oil-related tax revenue) and the Keystone XL Pipeline, the analysis identifies several themes article authors used in support and opposition to these significant hydrocarbon policies (see Tables 11-16 (p. 114-119) for a summary of the codes and themes). The analysis contributes to the dissertation's argument by showing how various actors (political and business elite, interest group representatives and "ordinary" citizens) use formal and informal discourses to both support and contest the status quo (i.e. the preferred views and policy positions of the petroleum industry and its allies). This chapter builds upon themes of subjectivity and citizenship advanced in chapter 4 in order to argue that editorials constitute a safe space for arguments about the oil industry's role in North Dakota. Such a space provides a critical window into ideological formation and contestation, as North Dakota culture otherwise discourages public debates on politics and policy, preferring deference to established institutions and experts (especially the Republican-dominate state government) and tried-and-true ways of thinking and doing (i.e. the North Dakota Way introduced in chapter 4). This analysis also demonstrates that seemingly innocuous or abstract policy debates such as tax spending (under M5) or the benefits and drawbacks of KXL (a pipeline that does not cross North Dakota) are in fact the vehicles through which

editorial writers engage in broader debates about identity, the role of the oil and gas industry in North Dakota and the fate of North Dakota at large.

Theoretical positions underpinning this analysis include insights from geographies of energy (as discussed in Chapter 2, Review of Relevant Literature) which argue that policies regarding energy production, transportation and use are increasingly determined by extra-local economic and political processes, thus providing residents of extractive zones little opportunity for contestation. However, this chapter will specifically seek to argue that North Dakota newspapers, which, despite the general decline of print media, still enjoy broad readership and whose content feature heavily in the conversation, offer a unique, place-specific form of contestation of fracking-led development. This argument follows similar assertions by critical discourse theorists such as James Paul Gee and Norman Fairclough, who argue that mass media serves as a key arena for struggles over social and political norms, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3 (Research Design).

Five North Dakota newspapers were chosen for selection of articles, which were then separated into different categories and coded in ATLAS.ti using the aforementioned methods (see Research Design chapter). The sample analyzed in this chapter consists of 271 editorials and letters-to-the-editor (LTEs) published during a five-year period between August, 1, 2011 and July 31, 2016[13], with the Dickinson Press (DD) contributing 117 articles, the Fargo Forum (FF) 115, the Minot Daily News (MDN) 26, the Tioga Tribune (TT) 11 and the Williston Herald (WH) 2. These articles cover 2 major current

[13] Although these categories are often separate in many newspapers, the newspapers in this sample rarely differentiated between the two and in many cases there was little indication as to whether an article was an editorial or a LTE.

event topics: Measure 5 (M5) (175 articles) and the Keystone XL pipeline (KXL) (96 articles). This chapter specifically analyzes narratives that support or oppose both M5 and KXL.

5.2 Analysis of Measure 5 editorials

5.2.1 Measure 5 summary

Measure 5 (M5), officially titled the North Dakota Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks Amendment (often referred to popularly by a combination of those terms, i.e. parks amendment, water amendment, wildlife amendment, etc.), was a state-wide ballot measure defeated by a nearly four-to-one margin the 2014 general election (Ballotpedia, 2016). However, if passed, the amendment would have designated 5 % of the state's oil extraction tax for a fund to be used to promote conservation and outdoor recreation activities.[14] This fund would have been overseen by the North Dakota Industrial Commission (chaired jointly by the governor, attorney general and secretary of agriculture) and a citizen review board consisting of representatives from conservation associations, fish and game organization, and the energy industry, all of whom would have been chosen by the governor.

[14] There were various debates as to how much oil would be produced and at what price, thus leading to wildly varying figures as to the amount of extraction tax collected and therefore how much the share for the M5 fund would be. The lower estimates were ~$60 million per year, with higher estimates closer to ~$300 million. M5 supporters tended to cite the lower numbers to argue that the amount proposed would not be a large imposition on the overall budget, whereas opponents tended to cite the higher numbers in order to argue the opposite.

One of the major purported reasons for the initiation of the ballot measure was frustration with the repeated failure of conservation-related measures in the state legislature, as well as a perceived lack of consideration for the environment in a political climate tilted heavily towards promoting and expanding mineral extraction through fracking. One of the events that motivated supporters was the watering down of Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem's Special Places initiative, which would have placed significant restrictions on drilling in environmentally sensitive areas. Objections from Republicans and the energy industry neutered the initiative. In addition, supporters expressed disappointment with the rather small scope of then-Governor Jack Dalrymple's Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), which provided only a token amount for conservation projects and which was widely viewed by the conservation community as a public relations stunt meant to paint the governor as environmentally friendly (Fuglie, 2014a).

The measure was heavily supported by the conservation community. Ducks Unlimited (DU) initiated the amendment and the Nature Conservancy was the largest individual financial backer, contributing more than $600,000. The measure was also heavily supported by the state-level Democratic Party (Democratic-Non-Partisan League) and received several "celebrity" endorsements from relatives of Theodore Roosevelt (a legendary figure in North Dakota homesteading history and the namesake of the state's national park) and Washington Capitals NHL player and University of North Dakota alumnus T.J. Oshie, one of the state's most prominent professional athletes.

Measure 5 was enthusiastically opposed by the state's business, energy, agricultural and property-rights lobbies, as well as the state-level Republican Party and several local, state and federal GOP politicians. The Greater North Dakota Chamber of

Commerce spearheaded the opposition campaign, creating an umbrella coalition and affiliated political action committee (PAC) under the name North Dakotans for Common Sense Conservation (NDCSC). While the PAC ultimately raised nearly $600,000 dollars, the American Petroleum Institute (API) independently spent more than $1 million to hire two public relations firms to lobby against M5 (Ballotpedia, 2016).

5.2.2 Arguments against M5

The major arguments against M5 largely revolved around the notion of a perceived "invasion" of a largely-conservative state by liberal and out-of-state interests who desired to "steal" hard-earned oil wealth in order to make it more difficult for average North Dakotans to determine how to manage their own lands and lifestyles. In particular, many of the arguments made revolved around the idea that the state's energy, agriculture and hunting industries would be disadvantaged by radical environmentalists who would destroy private property rights. In order of frequency, the five most common arguments advanced against M5 were:

1. The measure is an out-of-state takeover by corrupt environmental interests (51 articles), with DU's supposed corruption mentioned in 25 articles.
2. The money directed to this fund takes away from infrastructure and social-service needs in Bakken cities and towns (44 articles).
3. The measure is an attack on private property rights (40 articles).
4. The measure will disadvantage agricultural land users in favor of "conservation" (37 articles).
5. The measure is an end-run around the legislature, whose record supports the industries and individuals who believe they would be wronged if M5 were to go into effect (28 articles).

These arguments strongly mirror, oftentimes word for word, those advanced by the NDCSC under the “Amendment Concerns” section of their now-defunct website (no longer accessible as of April 7, 2018). Given that many articles using these talking points were written either directly by the Greater North Dakota Chamber or by partner organizations and their members, this suggests that there was at least some level of a coordinated strategy to push these arguments in the popular media. While anti-M5 letter writers often brought up personal or local anecdotes, these arguments held remarkably constant across all of the five newspapers. This suggests that in many cases, M5 opponent letter writers, especially professionals (i.e. LEWs, politicians, IGWs, etc.), were more concerned with repeating NDCSC talking points than with expressing their own general opinion. However, many CCWs writing on this topic had far more heterodox opinions about the negative effects of M5, despite often falling back into NDCSC logic. While the reasons for this deep penetration of elite discourses is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is possible that many M5 opponents who were already pre-disposed to support pro-industry positions were more heavily exposed to individuals and media sources that emphasize such talking points. The next few paragraphs will explore in depth what the “no” campaigners actually said in their editorials regarding each of the major talking points.

5.2.2.1. The out-of-state takeover

The theme of M5 resulting in an out-of-state takeover by corrupt environmentalist organizations, DU chief among them, occurred in more than half (52 of 93) of the editorials and LTEs written against the measure. Many writers were particularly animated on this

topic, as they felt that this would violate North Dakota's traditions of self-governance and self-sufficiency, both of which they felt were under threat due to an increasingly over-zealous federal government which sought to punish North Dakota for its reliance on fossil fuels and agriculture. This was extended specifically to DU and partner organizations, who were seen as being part of a conspiracy to take oil revenues from North Dakotans in order to satisfy the needs of "Washington", often a stand in for then-President Barack Obama, Democratic senators and representatives and others supposedly allied with the environmentalist cause. Excerpts below illustrate this theme:

> I did not sign onto DU for this BS, and I urge all North Dakota members to opt out like me on continued membership. I signed on for ducks, not politics. All DU is doing is going after the oil money. They accuse the Measure 5 opponents of being out-of-state interests and telling lies. As if DU is not out of state? With only 7,000 members (6,999 now with me gone), you think you are going to run my state? (Carlson, 2014b).

> Maybe all these groups who are pushing for this measure should just go back to their home states. And make no mistake, this is being driven by outsiders who see North Dakota as a cash cow. All these national environmental groups are flocking into our state just to take advantage of our natural resources. If my great-grandpa thought the original oil tycoons like Carnegie and Rockefeller were robber-barons; he'd really love these environmentalist carpet baggers (Kaldor, 2014).

> Real North Dakotans oppose Measure 5 … We know how to take care of our land without out-of-state groups coming in here and telling us how to do it. Let's send these groups back to Washington empty-handed (Jacobson, 2014).

> North Dakotans will be writing a blank check to non-profit organizations that are more concerned about ducks than people if they pass Measure 5 (Dihle, 2014).

This notion of betrayal by the federal government and formerly friendly organizations such as DU is stressed by measure opponents who feel that their values

are being disregarded to push goals out-of-sync with North Dakotans major priorities. One letter writer sought to paint M5 campaign manager Michael Dax as a disrespectful, carpet-bagging, East Coast elitist trying to impose unwanted environmentalism on the populace:

> He's a native New Yorker who recently moved to Fargo after working for the Montana Wilderness Association. Who does he think he is moving here and telling us as North Dakotans how we should take care of our land, outdoors and wildlife? We don't need out-of-staters telling us how to preserve our state's outdoors, hunting and wilderness. We're more than able to do that for ourselves without the help of outsiders like Dax who just don't get it. Don't sign the petition. But if you do, know that you're signing against agriculture, the true heritage of North Dakota, and for folks who don't have a vested interest in our future (Colwell, 2014).

The above quote, and many others in the same vein, make it clear that M5 opponents feel that this is not merely a political debate for policy specialists, but a personal one that represents a deep, existential challenge to what they feel makes North Dakota special and successful. Many letter writers were specifically upset that M5 would purportedly target the oil and gas and agricultural industries, the drivers of the state's economic renaissance in the 2010s, with opponents arguing that, "this fund would directly compete with our state's two largest industries, energy and agriculture" (Amundson, 2014), "the measure would have wide ranging and devastating results to North Dakota's largest and most impactful industries" (Fox, 2014), and that measure supporters are seeking to, "earmark dollars that could disrupt energy and agricultural development and production" (Quist, 2014). State Sen. Wesley Belter (R-Fargo), one of M5's fiercest public opponents, summed this feeling: "These out-of-state groups are not friends of our coal, oil, or agriculture industries. This is a bad idea for North Dakota's economy. This is white collar robbery of our money" (Belter, 2014).

Thus, the crux of this argument is that North Dakota's independence is being violated and that M5 is merely another in a long line of such intrusions. However, critics have argued that this anti-outsider stance on the part of state residents and Republican state officials is selective, given their repeated kowtowing to out-of-state energy companies and other conservative interest groups. In a recent dispute between the cities of Fargo, North Dakota and Minneapolis, Minnesota over Wells Fargo's role in funding the Dakota Access pipeline, a Minneapolis paper declared that, "North Dakota has moved to the right of Mussolini, making it a receptive home to a bank that defrauds customers, screws Natives, and exacerbates climate change" (Glass-Moore, 2016). Jim Fuglie, a prominent local blogger and former Democratic state official, argues that he has seen a marked departure from the cautious, ruggedly independent politics of old: "I've never seen a group of people that are so completely sold out as the Republicans in our state legislature" (personal interview, 25 July 2014). These arguments provide credence to the notion that those who argued against M5 may have been more concerned about who was doing the purported takeover and why, rather than the takeover itself.

5.2.2.2. Underfunding Bakken Communities

The second most frequent talking point advanced in the anti-M5 editorials was the notion that diverting tax money to create the necessary fund would deprive Bakken communities of the money they need to maintain infrastructure and social services. Despite the financially dubious nature of such a claim (the fund would only take 5% from one of the state's many sources of tax revenue), anti-M5ers held this line vociferously, leading readers to believe that this "theft" would have been the nail in the coffin of a

Bakken already burdened by regulatory overreach and the beginnings of a downward slide in oil prices. In particular, many of those using this argument liked to cite very large figures and extrapolate them out to 20 years in the future, thus resulting in deceptively large numbers lacking context, as is the case with these two examples:

> I am a lifelong Benson County farmer and rancher and an avid sportsman, and I am deeply concerned about the consequences of Measure 5. This ballot initiative would carve away 5 percent of oil extraction taxes — to the tune of almost $5 billion — and hand that over for projects that don't necessarily mesh with our priorities here in North Dakota. Don't get me wrong. Conservation is important to me. But there are better ways to achieve the goals of ensuring clean water, wildlife and parks for North Dakota. In 2013, North Dakota legislators established the Outdoor Heritage Fund, which is already investing $30 million per biennium in projects that enhance our outdoors (Kenner, 2014).
>
> Beware of Measure 5. The proponents make it sound good, but in reality it's a wolf in sheep's clothing. How much money do we need to spend on this issue? In my book, $4.3 billion in 25 years is a bit much. Four hundred schools could be built (that's more than one per school district), 282 hospitals, 390 miles of four-lane highway. That would be enough to stretch from the Montana border to Minnesota with about 50 miles left over. We could hire 88,000 state employees, or we could reduce or eliminate property and/or income tax (Moen, 2014).
>
> Spending $30 million to $50 million on recreation at this point in time, when so much is needed by the cities, counties and EMS, is crazy. Build the house, then worry about the swing set (Marek, 2014).

These arguments make strong logical and emotional appeals by creating the image of massive waste and deprivation. How could a common-sense, fiscally conservative North Dakotan vote to steal billions of dollars from innocent schoolchildren, truck drivers, the sick and, not least of all, hardworking American taxpayers? In particular, these purposely inflated numbers seek to bolster the case for sticking with the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), which at $30 million per year looks like a comparative bargain

against “the $4.8 billion fund they [M5 opponents] have their sights on with the faulty measure on the Nov. 4 ballot” (Schafer, 2014). To emphasize this point, M5 opponents used the supposed guardian of Teddy Roosevelt’s legacy, Dickinson State University undergraduate and Miss Roughrider Days 2015 Hannah Frazier, to demonstrate how even the young and uncorrupted share the proper North Dakota values that cause all right-thinking citizens to support such a piecemeal approach:

> When did we start valuing the agenda of nonresident groups over the needs of our own people? Why is it acceptable to give an estimated $300 million per biennium of state money to these private groups? It is not OK, and **it is not the North Dakota way** [emphasis added].Rest assured, the North Dakota Legislative Assembly passed the Outdoor Heritage Fund, which provides $15 million per year to conservation efforts in our state … I believe that we as North Dakotans are perfectly capable of tending and properly maintaining our land, keeping the heritage of our state alive … Clearly, they [out-of-state groups] do not understand that North Dakota is successful because of the hard work ethic, and proper management of natural resources already practiced by North Dakotans (Frazier, 2014).

These specific appeals are perhaps the most effective critique of the wastefulness of M5, casting M5 supporters as violators as all of the key positive traits of North Dakota. Specifically, Frazier successfully magnifies the out-of-state takeover argument to its logical extreme: not only are these liberal, Washington interlopers disregarding the will of humble North Dakotans and pushing this reckless proposal on her state, but in doing so they reveal their true character in besmirching the impeccable character of its residents. Despite lacking data to stand up to even the most basic fact-checking, such arguments retain their effectiveness due to their carefully crafted rhetoric, which appeals directly to some of the most hackneyed, yet most deeply-held, platitudes about what it means to be a “good” North Dakotan: cautious, conservative and deeply respectful of status quo, pro-

community thinking. Under this line of reasoning, M5 not only fails because its specific proposals are too expensive and potentially damaging to the Bakken, but also because it is deeply disrespectful by its very nature to the most basic ideas of what North Dakota is and should be.

5.2.2.3. An attack on property rights and farming

Along with the notion of fierce independence and self-reliance that forms the core of much conservative ideology in North Dakota is a belief in strong, inalienable private property rights. More than 95% of all land in the state is privately owned, the fourth-highest total of all US states in the Western region, where federal and state ownership of land is greatest (Vincent, Hanson and Argueta, 2017). Despite this belief, property rights in North Dakota are in many cases restricted for private non-profit groups. While in many states non-profit, conservation-oriented buyers such as DU or Nature Conservancy are allowed to purchase land from private individuals as if they were any other type of private buyer, this right is severely restricted in North Dakota due to the state's anti-corporate farming laws. These laws, which limit the ability of incorporated, non-agricultural groups to purchase agriculturally-assessed land, largely prevent private land from being owned by conservation groups (ND Legislative Branch, 2018). Due largely to misinterpretation or deliberate misinformation, many M5 opponents argued that M5 would reverse this statute and lead to widespread land purchasing by "environmentalist" interests and a restriction of hunting opportunities on private land. Additionally, as much of the land that would likely have been considered for conservation is rural, there was a strong overlap between the anti-private property and anti-farming arguments. Despite the potential hypocrisy of

supporting suppression of another's rights to bolster one's own, such arguments were extremely prominent among anti-M5 editorials.

Opponents of M5 were particularly incensed not only about the potential land grabbing, but also about the potential land grabbers. As noted above, opponents felt that DU and their allies in the pro-M5 camp were both dishonest and not supportive of norms governing land ownership and use in North Dakota, a theme that arose repeatedly in property rights-based arguments. In the editorial mentioned in section ii, Miss Roughrider Days also launched a strong attack against DU and their supposed stance on private property: "These groups have no clear agenda or spending plan except vague conservation ideas. Their idea of 'conservation' is buying up land, removing it from the hands of North Dakota citizens, all while increasing the price of already high land values" (Frazier, 2014). Several writers seized on language in the amendment that mandated that 75%of all money in the proposed fund would need to be spent annually, positing that the only way such sums could be spent was on private land:

> The fact is — this measure really would, contrary to what he [anti-M5 blogger Jim Fuglie] claims, create a stand-alone fund in our constitution that would give public and private groups hundreds of millions of dollars each biennium to spend on conservation projects. With that kind of big money and only so many conservation projects to even fund, they will be forced to look at other options such as buying land because of the requirement that at least 75 percent of the fund must be spent each year (Zetocha, 2014).

> One of the amendment's most alarming aspects is that there's no language explaining how the money will be spent other than that it will be spent on "conservation" and can be used to purchase land. Conservation groups would be able to buy land and take it out of production agriculture, restrict public access or close it to hunters and fishermen — whatever they wished (Godfread and Watne, 2014).

> I think this is just an example of good old fashioned greed. The trough is full and all the hogs are fighting for an additional share. Where would they possibly spend all this extra money? They are not supposed to be able to buy land, according to their proposal, but isn't that exactly where they are going with this? There can't be too many other places to spend this money (Kaldor, 2014).

Such lines of attack feed into classic tropes about the resistance of North Dakotans to new ideas without a proven track record: if it's different, involves lots of money and is run by the government and elitist outsiders, it simply must be risky, and at the very least, unwise. For those committed to "the North Dakota Way," such arguments are incredibly persuasive as they cause individuals to have an emotional response to the possibility of their lifestyles being compromised.

These factually suspect appeals were often highlighted in editorials bemoaning the fate of North Dakota's agricultural and hunting economies if M5 were to have passed. Many writers felt that these activities were not only important to their own livelihoods, but also that they were integral to their identity as rural North Dakotans connected to and invested in the landscape. These writers gave anecdotes of how farming, ranching and outdoor recreation have been the most important parts of their and their families' lives, arguing that if M5 were enacted these bonds would be broken:

> One of the reasons North Dakota hunters enjoy the great outdoors is because most private landowners allow hunters onto their property. I've developed a lot of good relationships with hunters over the years and I have no problem letting them on … But if hunters and anglers decide to support the out-of-state groups because they make empty promises about more opportunities, instead of supporting the landowners and neighbors they spent years building relationships with, well then my land is off limits (Voll, 2014).

> Farmers and ranchers make their living off of the land, drink the water and feed their families from the fruits of that land. We know the pain of saving a calf from a snow bank at 40-below zero, just to see it die a few days later. Who better to appoint than people who work to conserve a way of life that is sown into the framework of what it is to be a North Dakotan? The agricultural industry has been North Dakota's lifeblood for generations. The proposed Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks Amendment is not the answer to any of the above, nor is it the solution to protecting our air, water and soil (Odermann, 2014).
>
> After waiting for about 12 years, I cannot believe that the time has actually come. My oldest child hunted his first deer last weekend. As a child, some of my earliest family memories involved hunting, fishing and the great outdoors. And I cannot wait to make those same memories with my children … I am a big fan of clean water, I appreciate the beauty (and tastiness) of wildlife, and my family and I enjoy spending time at the parks frequently, but I believe we can address these issues without risking the future of agriculture (Wagner, 2014).

Thus, these arguments paint a rather clear picture of the supposedly stark divide between the traditional, agrarian lifestyle of "real" North Dakotans and the ruinous path down which environmentalists would take the state. This argument set up an either/or, us/them duality that forces residents to choose sides: either one remains true to their heritage and opposes M5 or one votes for it and shows their contempt for the people, industries and lifestyles that make North Dakota great. This strategy can have a powerful impact on many newspaper readers who may support the goals of M5 in the abstract, but share the same concerns as M5 opponents about the threats to their established pastimes and livelihoods that the measure might represent. Indeed, many newspaper readers will pay special respect to the opinions of farmers who identify their profession and deep Dakota roots by name, viewing this as proof that such writers have the authority and expertise to speak on such weighty topics.

5.2.2.4. The end run around the legislature

M5 arrived at a time when ballot measures were criticized by Republicans within the North Dakota legislature. On the same 2014 ballot as M5, was Measure 4 (M4), the North Dakota Referral and Initiative Reform Amendment. M4 was effectively a ballot measure to end ballot measures, as it made the process for creating such measures far more difficult and banned measures that amended the constitution in order fund specific purposes. Although M5 was such a measure and was viewed as being the tipping point that pushed M4 onto the ballot, the initial catalyst for M4was a longstanding dispute between the legislature and state residents over whether money earmarked for specific purposes could be diverted without public approval. Of particular salience to this dispute have been conflicts over how $300 million from a landmark 1998 settlement between leading tobacco companies and 46 state attorneys general (including then-ND Attorney General and current US Sen. Heidi Heitkamp) would be spent. While this money was designated solely for state-run anti-tobacco initiatives, the Republican-dominated legislature appropriated the money elsewhere. As a result, Sen. Heitkamp (then a private citizen) spearheaded a successful 2008 ballot measure that transferred control of the settlement money from the legislature to a new anti-tobacco commission and mandated the creation a stand-alone, comprehensive tobacco control agency, BreatheND (Heitkamp, 2018).[15] Since the passage of this amendment, Republicans have repeatedly

[15] Despite being widely credited with reducing smoking rates in ND, BreatheND has consistently been the bête noire of many Republicans and conservatives, who have held the agency up as an example of both wasted taxpayer money and an infringement on individual rights and the free market. Under the pretext of massive budget cuts due to a drop in overall tax revenues, the state legislature voted in June 2017 to

argued that the ballot measure system has been abused in order to curtail the authority of the legislature and that M4 is necessary to prevent future abuses such as those they attribute to BreatheND and to allow elected representatives to make revenue-related decisions that they believe best reflect the will of the majority of North Dakota voters. North Dakota Senate Majority Leader Al Carlson (R-Fargo), derided by opponents as "Angry Al" due to his belligerent and uncompromising leadership style, declared that M4 would be "good management of the taxpayer dollars. It's not a power grab" (Nowatzki, 2014).

However, as mentioned above, one of the reasons that M4 finally manifested itself some 6 years after the initial slight was the notion that M5 was merely a rehashing of the same problems posed by the tobacco amendment, in that M5 would force the legislature to spend state funds for only one specified purpose--conservation. Even worse, opponents mused, M5 would be a constitutional amendment, thus making it far more difficult to weaken or repeal through legislative means. State Sen. David Hogue (R-Minot), one of M4's original sponsors in the legislature, publicly stated that M4 was necessary to prevent abuses such as those that would be perpetrated by M5:

> Look no further than the language of Measure 5, the outdoor wildlife measure, and the mission of the not-for-profit Ducks Unlimited organization, to understand why Measure 4 is necessary to protect our state economy against special interest poaching of state resources … Why is this approach to state spending - permanently embedding spending in the state constitution - proposed in Measure 5, but prohibited by Measure 4, radical? Because it's undemocratic and inflexible (Hogue, 2014).

---

eliminate BreatheND and place tobacco control moneys under the purview of the North Dakota Department of Health.

Although pro-M4 sentiment was not nearly as strong as anti-M5 sentiment at the polls (M4 lost by 13 points), many of Hogue and Carlson's arguments about the need to curtail constitutionally-mandated spending found a ready audience among M5 opponents. Many of the attacks against M5 made in this vein relied on a similar tactic to those described in section ii: sowing doubt about the prudence of locking in billions of dollars of spending when it was unclear what budget needs would be in the future. Jon Godfread, the public face of the Greater North Dakota Chamber's campaign to defeat M5, summarized this argument succinctly:

> It [M5] would be part of the state constitution. That's disconcerting for many reasons. Not only would it mandate massive amounts of conservation spending for the next 25 years — to the tune of some $5 billion — but the only way to change or repeal it would be through another statewide vote of the people. How is that a good thing? (Godfread, 2014).

Additionally, writers felt that this constitutional lock-in was bad for democracy because it was, "a good-sounding attempt by greedy and selfish people and outside interests to tap into the North Dakota oil money and usurp the authority of our duly elected Legislature" (Carlson, 2014a) and interfere with "sound government decision-making" (Schafer, 2014). Writers found particularly unsound the notion that "special interests" were able to skip the normal political process in order to codify their agenda without any input from those charged with implementing it, often equating this with cutting in line and gaining and unfair advantage:

> Many other special interest groups work very hard with elected officials during the legislative session to secure fair levels of funding. It should be the same for the groups supporting this amendment. They should not be allowed to skip the legislative process and take this amount of money off the table (Brooks, 2014).

> In this case, special interests are looking to surpass our electoral process, and our budgeting and spending processes, to fund their own special interests. No matter how great a special interest is, that is why government and our legislative process exist. I want elected officials to debate conservation in the same process as they debate all other spending. Measure 5 usurps this process and gives it over to those that have the most money. Is that really what we want? (Burgum, 2014).

While such arguments clearly demonstrate that certain "special interests" are acceptable, the purported behavior of DU and their pro-M5 allies was not. Indeed, while environmentalist groups are seen by M5 opponents as invaders, the behavior of special interests that worked to support the measure's defeat (API, Greater North Dakota Chamber, etc.) was alternately praised or ignored by M5 opponents. Such reasoning, at times bordering on willful ignorance, is in keeping with other attempts to demarcate appropriate behaviors which support the conservative, status quo culture of North Dakota. Thus, support for pro-business "special interests" is seen as appropriate, as the actions of these groups do not, under the logic of M5 opponents, undermine the will of North Dakota voters (or, at least, that of Republicans in the state legislature). However, as we will see in our next section outlining the arguments of M5 supporters, it is these same entrenched, "common sense" special interests that many M5 supporters believe are responsible for many of the specific problems that M5 potentially addresses.

5.2.3. Arguments for M5

The major arguments for M5 largely focused on the idea that the environment in North Dakota was, as a whole and the Bakken specifically, not properly protected from poor land use processes, many of which could be directly linked to oil and gas industry activity. Thus, in the minds of most commenters, not only were the goals of M5 fully justifiable, but so was funding it through taxes levied on oil, considered to be the root cause of the "Bakken Hell," as one writer described environmental problems in the oil-producing region of North Dakota. In particular, M5 advocates argued that their approach was not the least bit radical, as it neither jeopardized the state's overall economy nor mandated any specific land ownership or use conditions. M5 supporters were less uniform in their overall arguments than M5 opponents, suggesting less direct coordination among supporter groups. The most common themes stressed were that M5 would be generally good for North Dakota's outdoor heritage (all 74 articles mentioned this to varying degrees), with a notable subset (26 articles) arguing specifically that policies enacted under M5 would be positive for farming in North Dakota. In addition, writers frequently invoked the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt (11 articles), as well as expressing strong support for environmentalism/conservation in general (12 articles). In order to make these points, writers often invoked specific damage that could be remedied under an enacted M5, as well as more directly appealing to scientific, rather than solely cultural or economic logic, than did M5 opponents. The following subsections will look in-detail at how these arguments were deployed by pro-M5ers.

5.2.3.1. Preserving the environment

Just as was the case with many M5 opponents, M5 supporters often wrote of their personal, family connections to rural, outdoor recreation and lifestyles. However, where supporters differed was in their view that such opportunities were under threat not from out-of-state liberals and environmentalists, but from the oil and gas industry and its enablers in state and local government:

> With a wink of an eye and a contribution to the administration in Bismarck these billionaire oilmen were able to gut and lay waste to this pristine area [Western North Dakota]. The administration in Bismarck turned and looked away … Now we, as residents of North Dakota, need to save what little of this environment is left … **I am voting "yes" on Measure 5 to keep a small portion of North Dakota North Dakota** [emphasis added by author] (Evenson, 2014a).

> What exactly do they [API] have against clean water? What is their problem with North Dakota wildlife? And have they ever set foot in any kind of park? Further, one would like to think that, given the oil industry's extreme impact to western North Dakota's natural and human environment, they'd be among the amendment's biggest supporters, if for no other reason than to feel less guilty about the monumental diminishment of the quality of life that they are causing out here in what I euphemistically call Bakken Hell (Heiser, 2014).

Along these same lines, many writers were particularly angry about the fact that politicians were attempting to tar M5 supporters as out-of-state, overfunded elitists, when they were so quick themselves to take contributions from oil companies and lobbying groups such as API, all of whom they felt did not have North Dakota's best interests at heart:

> API is a big-time, Washington, D.C., lobbying group for big oil. So far, they have dumped more than $1 million into North Dakota to promote oil, part of which has gone to fund its website in an effort to diminish the work of CWWP [Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks Amendment, aka M5] to reclaim landscapes that big oil despoiled in the first place. So what does the API

> proclaim? It says CWWP gets contributions from out-of-state interests. Really! Now, isn't that the pot calling the kettle black (Upgren, 2014).
>
> The arguments against Measure 5 boiled down to some very contrived ideas. The most prominent was how rich "outsiders", long-haired, posy-sniffing hippies, a part of the Ducks Unlimited/Nature Conservancy/Pheasants forever conspiracy, were going to impose their will on besieged local farmers … Then I saw who was against Measure 5 – the oil industry, builders, bankers, … etc. And these guys were calling the posy-sniffers deep-pocketed? (J.D. Taylor, 2014).
>
> When the dust settles, the out-of-state corporate industries will have come and gone … they have a history of that. Our families will be here to continue our lives without them. I hope we will have chosen to have preserved and improved our water, air, and land resources, and made a better life for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren (Goetz, 2016).

These and many arguments demonstrate the disdain of M5 supporters for - and fatigue with - arguments about the supposed radical overspending and bureaucracy that M5 represented. These appeals were seen as hypocritical given how governmental and business groups had effectively prostrated themselves at the feet of energy corporations and rewritten the rules to facilitate large transfers of wealth to private, out-of-state individuals, many of whom had no vested interest in North Dakota beyond accumulation. Such a rhetorical strategy seeks to flip the anti-M5 narrative about who is violating North Dakota traditions; under the pro-M5 version, those who want to protect the environment and resist its destruction are the state's true champions, rather than those M5 opponents who cynically cherry pick which "Washington" actors are good and bad. For many M5 supporters, labeling something or someone as "out-of-state", and therefore likely undesirable, is unproductive. In fact, many M5 supporters spoke positively of DU and other national non-profit groups in the pro-M5 coalition, as well as specifically mentioning conservation programs from neighboring Minnesota (often cast by conservatives as the

encroaching, elitist, and liberal) that they felt proved the efficacy of M5's model. In contrast to M5 opponents, many M5 supporters did not view being a native Dakotan as automatically conferring respect for the state and its landscape, particularly when many in the state were so quick to compromise their values at the prospect of financial gain through oil.

This charge of strategic invocation of the essential characteristic of North Dakotans, a "Dakotaness," by decision makers for political convenience was leveled at Gov. Dalrymple's attempts to pass off the OHF as a viable alternative to M5. Many writers saw this as a weak attempt to undermine arguments that bolstered M5 by deflecting attention back to the supposed goodness of the state Republican leadership without making any significant commitments to conservation. One particularly animated writer argued that Dalrymple only committed to such an idea after the public began to take the pro-M5 coalition seriously, noting that the "convoluted" OHF expansion was not truly sincere, but merely an attempt to deliver a defeat to M5 given its announcement only weeks before the election (Oppegard, 2014). Other writers also echoed such sentiments, arguing that while it was encouraging to see Dalrymple and Majority Leader Carlson put forward conservation-funding proposals, such attempts were either ill-conceived, dishonest or overdue, with readers describing them as, "welcome, but somewhat tardy" (Upgren, 2014) and "not proactive enough to meet North Dakota's increasing demands and needs" (Brauhn, 2014). Indeed, many argued that the reference to OHF was nothing more than a long line of conservative attempts to deflate opposition movements by co-opting conservationist language to mislead the public about their true intentions. In particular, the noted local blogger Jim Fuglie stated that it was extremely hypocritical and

disappointing to see North Dakota Farmers' Union President Mark Watne claim to be a champion of conservation while publicly vilifying farmers who voiced support for M5 (Fuglie, 2014b).

Thus, what irked many M5 supporters was the notion that because they would collaborate with groups other than those that are either explicitly conservative and/or claim to uphold traditional, rural North Dakota values, they were somehow suspect or disrespectful. Many writers felt that the ways in which conservation was defined by Republicans and conservative-leaning groups was both woefully inadequate in scope given the environmental problems faced by the state, while also excluding the possibility of most public-sector intervention. Under this narrow conception, M5 was essentially a non-starter, not because its ideas were wrong, but because it went against the anti-government, pro-corporate style of conservation that is so prominent in North Dakota and the American West more generally. Such tensions between more conservative, Sagebrush-lite approaches and more full-throated conservationist/environmentalist ones animate the following subsection.

5.2.3.2. Supporting farming through oil

For M5 opponents, M5 represented a direct attack on the entwined homesteader ethos of respect for private property and support for agriculture. Many M5 supporters, though, saw the amendment as a way to bolster many successful conservation programs that have either been over-enrolled and/or underfunded. Specifically, many writers felt that M5 could either be used to expand the state's PLOTS (Private Land open to

Sportsmen) program or help to establish a state-run alternative to the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which pays farmers to plant erosion-resistant crops on environmentally sensitive land in lieu of production crops. While each of these programs was also popular with many conservative letter writers, those individuals felt that a choice needed to be made between either funding M5 or devoting money to PLOTS/CRP. M5 supporters felt that such arguments were fundamentally flawed, as PLOTS and CRP, which both have farmers ready to participate immediately, would be an easy target for any of the mandated spending. Writers also felt that given the steadily diminishing funding and long waitlists for CRP, the fact that the state would help to enroll more acres under conservation would send a signal to Washington regarding the efficacy and necessity of the program. One M5 supporter also argued that expanding voluntary conservation programs at the state level would ultimately reduce federal control and purported overreach in the state, by demonstrating that farmers are capable of self-management and that new regulations are not needed: “The amendment will allow North Dakotans to design programs that work best for us instead of waiting for the federal government” (Monson, 2014).

Beyond the expansion of land-sparing programs, writers also felt that conservation funded through M5 would have a more basic and self-evident benefit for future farmers and ranchers: the availability of more pristine acreage and water sources for farmers to use. Many letter writers noted that for young Dakotans, the costs for both entering the agricultural profession and for large-scale conservation were extremely daunting. Yet these same writers also felt that spending under M5 would prove to be a fiscally responsible method for meeting both of these goals:

> The bottom line is that conservation on a scale that has broad societal benefits is expensive. Fortunately, North Dakota is in a position [because of oil] to be able to afford such an investment while still providing for our schools, infrastructure needs and other priorities. That's why Measure 5, and the amount of money it would provide for conservation, makes sense to me (Ringelman, 2014).
>
> I've been in conservation for 30 years and the most effective bang for the buck is on the ground conservation practices. North Dakotans have a unique opportunity [because of oil wealth] to make a substantial investment in conservation and wildlife habitat to keep these traditions alive … without raising a single cent in taxes on anyone (R.S. Smith, 2014).
>
> The rewards received from the amendment are numerous and would cost citizens nothing to achieve … It's time to take a portion of the financial surplus from the oil boom and put it towards resources that sustain and nourish our communities (Willand, 2014).

Many letter writers countered the notion that M5 was a cultural break from the traditions of fiscal conservatism and individual property rights, arguing instead that M5 would provide citizens and the government more flexibility in productively managing both budgets and agricultural land. In fact, former Lieutenant Governor and veteran syndicated columnist Lloyd Omdahl argued that such rights, as well those to hunting and outdoor recreation, would become increasingly less viable without effective conservation:

> The owners of wetlands have a property right that they should be able to convert into income … yet we need to acknowledge the loss of millions of acres of outdoor recreational space. The constitutional right to bear arms and the right to hunt will have little meaning when we have no game to shoot. So perhaps there is a need for the state to shore up its hunting habitat (Omdahl, 2014).

The concept of preserving tradition through financially sound conservation strongly animates our next subsection, that of preserving Theodore Roosevelt's conservation legacy.

5.2.3.3. Upholding Theodore Roosevelt's legacy

Although Theodore Roosevelt spent only 4 years in western North Dakota adventuring and ranching during the 1880s, his time there is often said to have inspired his zeal for conservation and the expansion of federal public lands. Roosevelt's rugged, masculine image and promotion of conservation for outdoor recreation makes him an oft-invoked image among North Dakotans on both the right and left of the political spectrum (NPS, 2017). However, those with a more interventionist mindset tend to heavily emphasize his public lands legacy (concretized in North Dakota's living memorial of Theodore Roosevelt National Park), arguing that conservation is both an individual and collective responsibility shared by all North Dakotans:

> People of the Western Edge think very highly of Theodore Roosevelt, in no small part due to his conservation efforts as president. All North Dakotans need to consider whether T.R. was right when he said: "I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us" (Moore, 2014).

Such a spirit animated many M5 supporters, who argued that the measure was an integral part of strengthening the preservationist movement in the state, especially given the threats placed on the landscape by oil and gas.

Many of these Rooseveltian enthusiasts felt that not passing M5 would not only be bad for the North Dakota environment, but would also directly dishonor the Roughrider spirit that Roosevelt and other early-20th century conservationist icons worked so hard to protect. A writer who went out of his way to describe his life history vis a vis hunting in the Badlands, noted that M5 was specifically needed to honor Roosevelt, as he had "made

North Dakota the cradle of conservation" (Feininger, 2014). One CCW, who appeared to take a neutral stance by not directly declaring whether readers should vote "yes" or "no", posited that the correct choice could be arrived at by comparing the bill's goals to members of the aforementioned group, such as Roosevelt, John Muir and Gifford Pinchot. If M5 and these leaders' visions matched, then M5 would be, "roaring an opportunity for conservation" (Carter, 2014). Indeed, another CCW argued that supporting M5 was a direct Rooseveltian challenge to entrenched anti-environmental interests in the oil and gas lobby, noting that Roosevelt and his disciples "speak the truth", while "API has not been speaking the truth on Measure 5" (Myerchin, 2014b). Thus, many writers felt that that not honoring Roosevelt's charge by supporting M5 would be tantamount to selling out and corrupting the purity of both people and prairie that make North Dakota special.

Writers also argued that approving M5 would be equivalent to acting as Roosevelt would, were he still alive and faced with the same situation. Several essentially took the line of WWTD? or "What Would Teddy Do?," assigning Roosevelt an almost spiritual omnipresence:

> North Dakota has outstanding natural beauty and incredible opportunities for outdoor activity. Because of the efforts and sacrifices of many, we are able to enjoy much of what our Creator saw fit to put here: wildlife, fish, wildflowers, rivers, wetlands, prairies and Badlands … These are things we all need to live, and they make living here magnificent. Theodore Roosevelt knew (Kutka, 2014).
>
> So, I am thinking it is time to be progressive, like former President Teddy Roosevelt, who established millions of acres for parks and visitor centers, including preservation of our magnificent Badlands … This makes not just common sense, but good sense (Goetz, 2014).
>
> Teddy Roosevelt must be cheering up in heaven (Monson, 2014).

Although such declarations may seem hyperbolic, they are in keeping with many rhetorical styles frequent in the frontier romanticizing of North Dakota and its rural, outdoor heritage, specifically the tripartite loyalties often emphasized as being at the core of a humble North Dakotan: faith, family and community. Indeed, for liberals, whose "real American" bona fides are often called into question both by conservative letter writers and in broader political discourse, the ability to so closely link their own values and practices to such an icon of self-reliance provides yet another opportunity to prove that conservatives do not have a monopoly on "common sense" thinking. As mentioned in chapter 1, in North Dakota, being branded as irrational and/or out-of-touch can be the kiss of death for one's credibility, regardless of the actual merits of one's argument.

5.2.3.4. Cautious opposition

Deviation from "common sense" thinking, especially for those on the liberal side of the political spectrum, often leads to an immediate dismissal of one's standing and credibility to intervene in meaningful debates. M5 supporters, many of whom were self-identified Democrats or affiliated with perceived liberal interest groups, tended to be much less forceful in their arguments than M5 opponents, often taking great pains to emphasize how moderate and non-radical M5 was. The tone of many pro-M5 editorials gave the impression of trying to appear as logical and non-threatening as possible, perhaps as a counter-weight to the angry and at-times conspiratorial tone used by some anti-M5 writers, although it is not clear why such styles might have been adopted. This strategy

was employed frequently by those writers seeking to debunk claims made by M5 opponents through the use of fact-and-figure laden arguments.

One of the major areas of M5 support was the attempt to downplay the amendment's overall cost and emphasize its supposedly negligible impact on infrastructure and social service funding. As mentioned in section a, M5 opponents often cited the highest possible estimates for the amendment's cost without broader context, thus making M5 appear to be extremely expensive and therefore imprudent. Supporters sought to demonstrate how the actual amount was small when compared to the overall oil-related taxes collected by North Dakota. In particular, writers rarely mentioned the actual dollar amounts (some as high as $175 million per year) and instead focused on the fact that M5's budget was only 5% of one of many oil-related taxes. This gave the impression of M5 being fiscally prudent at the 5%, regardless of actual dollar amount, looking very small against the anti-M5 talking points.

The second major area in which M5 supporters sought to normalize the amendment was in its argument that M5 would be about promoting choice and competition by allowing farmers, conservation organization and the state government more flexibility in choosing how best to manage land and allocate resources for conservation programs. Several writers argued that M5 policies would be a method for rural North Dakotans to re-assert their rights in the face of dismissal from urban, governmental elites in cities such as Bismarck, Fargo and Grand Forks. One Bismarck attorney wrote that M5 was not, in fact, solely a conservation measure, but a tool for rural economic growth and the protection of outdoor livelihoods:

> When these rural communities have hunters and anglers visiting, they see the benefits in their gas stations, cafes and bars, as well as helping to provide clean water and flood control. Simply put, the Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks Amendment makes North Dakota common sense because the benefits to our rural landowners and rural communities will be felt far and wide (Myerchin, 2014a).

Another writer, who self-identified as a rural property owner, argued that M5 would directly benefit her by allowing her to make better decisions about who she could sell and rent land to, whether Ducks Unlimited or otherwise: “As a farmer/rancher I believe I should be able to sell my land to whomever I want to. If a farmer wants to retire farm land for conservation Measure 5 is another tool for doing it” (Anderson, 2014). Such arguments place M5 in line with arguments about free enterprise, private property rights, competition, growth and rural, “real American” family values and wholesomeness, a strategy which was taken to its logical conclusion by Evan Nelson, then president of the North Dakota Environmental Law Society:

> First and best, it [M5] does not raise taxes … Second, this is a local and state solution, not a federal government intrusion … Third, the bill ensures the state can only spend money it already has on conservation … In other words, this is the fiscally conservative way to conserve (E. Nelson, 2014).

However, casting M5 as the “conservative” choice had several downsides. First, it played directly into the opposition’s hands: if the measure was really that conservative, then why would it even be necessary in a state dominated by conservative Republicans and industries who stood united against any major challenges to low-cost, low-regulation orthodoxy? Why not, as many M5 opponents suggested, expand the OHF voluntarily, rather than mandate spending? Second, along these same lines, veteran liberal

commentator Jack Zaleski argued that making the amendment more conservative in order to appeal to voters ultimately both hindered the campaign and would have distorted M5's effectiveness had it actually passed. In particular, Zaleski felt that by giving the governor veto power over land sales, as well as creating a committee of overseers dominated by state officials, Ducks Unlimited and other M5 drafters had undermined their position. Third, M5 proponents were constantly on the defensive, trying to downplay the measure's supposed radicalness and counter talking points, and thus did not craft an effective, winning narrative of their own: "One of the legacies of North Dakota Measure 5, the conservation amendment, will be that lies writ large and told often can carry the day … opponents of the measure were proponents of the big lie. It worked" (Zaleski, 2014). Thus, it did not matter what the actual effects of M5 might have been, as opponents were more successful in both setting the terms of the debate and in spreading their version of the truth, which factual or not, resonated better with many North Dakotans.

5.3 Analysis of Keystone XL editorials

5.3.1 The Keystone XL debate in North Dakota

While North Dakota has been one the epicenters of the shale boom, another major energy expansion has occurred in Canada: the harvesting of the oil/tar sands.[16] One of the major proposals for the transportation of oil sands has been Keystone XL (KXL), an expansion

[16] "Oil sands" is the preferred is industry term, while "tar sands" is usually a pejorative used by opponents to emphasize the sands volatility and "dirtiness" when compared to other types of oil. The use of tar sands, though, has become so widespread in popular culture, that even the respected Argonne National Laboratory (2012) uses the term instead of oil sands in its information sheets on heavy oils. This dissertation will make use of oil sands, except when directly quoting other authors.

of the existing Keystone Pipeline system (a section of which currently runs through North Dakota) which brings sands from Alberta to refineries in Illinois and Texas. KXL in particular would bring sands south through the Great Plains to a junction point in Nebraska where it would connect up with existing parts of the Keystone system (TransCanada, 2018).

KXL, which was first announced in 2008, attracted a broad coalition of opponents concerned about environmental issues such as climate change impacts and the potential contamination of water sources in the Ogallala Aquifer. This public movement against KXL, as well as various legal disputes regarding pipeline route and eminent domain issues, were contributing factors to the long delay of approval for KXL, which received tentative federal approval from the Trump Administration in March 2017, but has yet to begin construction as of June 2017. As this nine-year period of indecision and uncertainty wore on, a significant partisan divide emerged, with many Democrats and liberals, especially in non-oil, Democratic-leaning states, strongly opposing KXL and many conservatives and Republicans strongly supporting it (Gravelle & Lachapelle, 2015). It is not surprising that KXL was a second leading topic of discussion in the editorial section of North Dakota newspapers according to our sample (see Chapter 3.6.2).

5.3.2. Arguments supporting KXL

The major arguments for KXL were largely premised on the assumption that KXL was a proxy for the oil and gas industry, with particular implications for North Dakota, which has become especially reliant on the industry for jobs, revenue and development. Most KXL supporters viewed KXL as a matter of vital importance and framed it as a

microcosm of the success or failure of the entire petroleum industry. Much of this exuberance was due to optimistic or erroneous assumptions about North Dakota's role in constructing and supplying crude oil to KXL. In particular, two notions about KXL were of particular importance to understanding the rationale behind the thinking of many KXL supporters: the unofficial agreement to use up to 100,000 barrels/day of Bakken crude to lighten the transported sands as they pass through a junction point at Baker, Montana; and the incorrect notion that KXL would pass through North Dakota and/or directly transport North Dakota crude. Although many KXL supporters did not express support for all or any of these ideas, nearly all writers in this sample felt that North Dakota would be significantly negatively impacted without KXL.

The five major arguments used by writers in support of KXL are as follows:

1. Transporting oil via pipeline is far safer and more desirable than via rail or truck (19 articles).
2. KXL is good for overall energy security (18 articles).
3. KXL is a bipartisan project (14 articles).
4. KXL presents little to no environmental risk (13 articles).
5. Opposition to KXL is anti-Canadian and bad for national security (8 articles).

The overall goal of most KXL supporters was to use these arguments to prove that KXL was not only important for the oil industry and North Dakota's economic survival, but that its benefits were so patently obvious and indisputable. Writers sought to demonstrate that KXL opponents were some combination of irrational, ill-informed or devious promoters of an inflexible and absolutist environmentalist agenda. Indeed, environmentalism is often portrayed as incompatible with the North Dakota Way, thus appeals against it are often highly effective.

5.3.2.1. Pipelines over rails

While North Dakota has become the second-largest oil producer in the United States after Texas, the state is generally considered to lack adequate pipeline and refining capacity. Thus, a major portion of Bakken oil is shipped out of state via rail, and to a lesser extent by truck.[17] Although KXL does not directly transport sweet crude, the expected 100,000 barrels/day (approximately 10% of the daily crude extracted in North Dakota) of Bakken oil that would be added to the Alberta sands as a conditioner, which is seen as a major step towards lessening the pressure on the state's rail and road networks. Pro-KXL writers, many of whom heavily promoted the Bakken's supposed role in the pipeline, specifically felt that this was important for 2 major reasons: lessening the frequency of accidental spills and avoiding catastrophic rail accidents.

News coverage of the oil industry frequently focuses on rail, truck and pipeline spills of various types, including crude oil, unused fracking fluids and produced water (the mixture of crude oil, water, used fracking fluids and potential natural contaminants that flow back to the wellhead after fracking has been completed).[18] Despite these fluids being of wildly different composition and the spills occurring from different methods of transport

[17] The construction of the Dakota Access and Sandpiper pipelines, both of which are designed to directly transport Bakken crude to refineries in the Midwestern United States, is viewed by many pro-oil individuals as the major way to solve this issue. Although Dakota Access - which became a source of international interest due to protests against its construction during the fall of 2016 - has become operational as of June 2017, it had not yet become a significant topic of public debate until several months after November 2015 (when the Obama administration officially rejected KXL) and is thus mentioned only in passing by KXL writers. Sandpiper, which would have brought Bakken oil across Minnesota to Lake Superior, was indefinitely suspended in September 2016 due to intense public opposition and expected lack of return on investment due to continued low oil prices. It, too, was rarely mentioned.

[18] In 2016, The Fargo Forum, the state's largest newspaper by circulation, published 68 stories about the oil and gas industry using the word "spill" and 102 stories about the industry using the word "leak."

(i.e. crude is spilled far more often from pipelines and rail cars, whereas fracking fluids are most often trucked and produced water spills in a myriad of ways), such spills are often reported after the fact, often with little context provided as to what was spilled (and how) and the potential health and safety impacts. These spills happen so frequently (745 official spills in 2016 [North Dakota Department of Health, 2018]), that it becomes difficult for one to keep track of specific incidents. Many interviewees for this research complained of fatigue and confusion due to the near daily reporting of oilfield incidents. Several pro-KXL writers argued that KXL, by virtue of being a pipeline (and thus inherently safer than other transportation methods), would reduce spills (an inherently ambiguous term, as shown above):

> Do we think spills will still happen? Yes, we do. Actually, we'd bet on it. But we also believe that no matter how oil is shipped, that thick black liquid will, without a doubt, somehow make its way to market. Nothing can stop it, so it might as well be transported through the safest and most reliable method (Wenzel, 2014).

> For one thing, both trains and pipelines are safe, as long as "safe" is understood to mean very low risk (as opposed to no risk at all). For another, should we care to zero in on that area of very low risk, we'd see that modern pipelines might be termed "very low risk" and probably are the safest way to move oil … And in any event, now that the comparative safety of pipeline transport is clear, Keystone XL opponents have one less argument against the pipeline. All that's left is their claim that the oil should be left in the Canadian ground, forever (Dickinson Press Editorial Board, 2013).

> I know pipelines do make messes … But at least you know where that spill is going to occur, more or less … Once you see the sausage get made up close, you realize the business of transporting the gooey goodness becomes a choice between the lesser of two evils — pipelines or trains. Now I'm no expert, but it seems pretty clear that given that choice, I'll take the pipeline evil every time (Hickman, 2015).

Lurking under the surface of all of these quotations is the notion that fossil fuels are inevitable, a concept that Unruh (2000) has referred to as “carbon lockin” and that Widener (2013) has more recently called “a protracted age of oil.” Thus, standing in the way of their exploitation is not only pointless, but also suspicious, as the DP Editorial Board quip about KXL opponents wanting to leave Canadian oil in the ground demonstrates. Such hyperbole and deliberate misstatement of the facts – regarding both the actual effects of KXL, as well as those who argue against it – serves to paint opponents as obstinate and unwilling to engage in efforts to find “reasonable” solutions.

Such notions of insincere pipeline detractors animated many of the pro-KXL arguments regarding the pipeline’s role in reducing oil-by-rail traffic, and therefore catastrophic accidents. Many of these arguments reflected nervousness about so-called “Bakken Bombs” - the name for trains carrying crude from the oil patch to out-of-state refineries – two of which had recently derailed. One was a visually spectacular, yet non-casualty explosion in Casselton in rural Eastern North Dakota (Jul. 6, 2013) and a more severe explosion causing the death of 47 people in Lag Megantic, Quebec (Dec. 30, 2013). Pro-KXL writers sought to argue that, since oil *had* to be moved somehow, not supporting KXL, and by proxy other pipelines, meant that opponents (stereotyped, as usual, as out-of-touch, enviro-zealot, pro-“Washington” dupes) effectively endorsing the dangers of Bakken Bombs. A case in point was Brian Kalk (R), then-chairman of the North Dakota Public Service Commission (the agency in charge of approving and regulating state infrastructure), who tied North Dakota’s safety woes directly to the intransigence of President Obama and federal pipeline regulators. Kalk implied that Obama was punishing North Dakota, whose energy economy is “the envy of the nation”, out of jealousy, by

publicly claiming to support North Dakota's quest for safe oil transport while secretly working to block KXL:

> Currently, we do not have adequate pipeline capacity, a situation that is exacerbated by the refusal of the Administration to approve the Keystone XL pipeline … We need to have the ability to move product, via pipelines, so as to lessen the dependence on rail transportation. The Casselton accident was too close for comfort (Kalk, 2014).

A Canadian CCW was less subtle in casting blame, arguing that Obama had the power to stop future train accidents by approving KXL, yet chose to hide behind the smokescreen of environmental concerns while simultaneously expanding far more unsustainable offshore and arctic drilling (Church, 2015).

Still others promoting the Obama hypocrisy thesis took a far more conspiratorial tone, alleging the existence of a sinister plot between Obama and Warren Buffett, a frequent target of criticism among conservatives. Buffett, whose Berkshire Hathaway corporation has fully owned BNSF (one of the largest rail transporters of crude oil) since 2009, shares somewhat of a mixed reputation in North Dakota, being alternately praised for his business acumen – especially due to his foresight in buying the moribund BNSF early on in the boom - and derided for his association with the Democratic Party and President Obama. This latter source of animus was used by several writers to pile onto the already significant blame placed on Obama as one of the chief reasons for the non-progress made on KXL approval and construction. William Triplett, a long-time Washington insider and Republican operative, argued that it was precisely Buffett's behind-the-scenes needling that led Obama to delay the pipeline and would ultimately cause him to reject it (he had not yet done so at the time this editorial was written):

> It may be entirely coincidental that a lot of Buffett cash continued to the flow to the Obama money machine right when Mr. Obama delayed Keystone XL and continues to flow right when he may be blocking it permanently. There is no doubt, however, that every day Keystone XL is delayed, Berkshire Hathaway makes a lot of money. A chart of dollars out of Berkshire Hathaway and into the Democratic National Committee would look very ugly … In short, Mr. Obama is about to hammer the American energy industry, and he's doing it for money (Triplett, 2013).

William Balgord, a petroleum engineer, echoed this view in arguing that despite the inherent good of building more railroad tracks and tank cars to bring more oil to market, Obama has been unwilling to consider KXL and other pipelines due to not wanting to risk the funding and support of Buffett. Balgord argued that this delaying directly put North Dakota and other rail-heavy areas at risk for another Lag Megantic-type disaster (Balgord, 2014). The editors at the FF summed up such sentiments rather pithily: “If President Barack Obama backs away from his ‘all energy sources’ pledge and stops Keystone XL, the winner will be railroads, not the environment” (Fargo Forum Editorial Board, 2013).

5.3.2.2. KXL is a net positive for energy security

Anti-rail (and to a lesser extent anti-truck) attacks reflected a strong dislike of “Washington” regulation of the energy industry, which they felt would ultimately cripple the Bakken, and therefore the national, economy. Many of these critics were not so much arguing against rail transport (many admitted as much, since they felt that all crude transport was ultimately positive), but were using it as a straw man to prop up KXL, which would at most transport ~20%of all Bakken crude. Such a strategy was also consistently

employed in attempts to paint KXL as a major component in ensuring the U.S.'s long-term energy and national security.

KXL was seen by many pro-KXL writers as a line in the sand for the American energy sector, with its approval or defeat being one of the principal determinants of the future success or failure of both the industry and the U.S. as a major economic power. Specifically, many writers were fixated on the notion that the fracking boom had finally returned the United States to its long-lost – and unquestionably deserved – position of the world's top oil and gas producer, as well as restoring all of the symbolic geopolitical muscle that comes with it. Deliberately limiting such a favored position by torpedoing KXL would be the equivalent of a self-inflicted wound, simultaneously destroying America's recession-busting dynamo and giving a permanent economic boost to foreign (non-Canada) oil producers whose agendas were seen as inherently anti-American. Many writers argued that KXL was an antidote to American over-reliance on Middle Eastern oil, which is akin to indirectly funding terrorism and supporting dictatorship:

> And getting the price down further, to say $60 a barrel, would make it impossible for Iran to continue spending on nuclear weapons and terrorist groups abroad without lowering the already abysmal living standard of those Iranians who are not members of the ruling elite. That could be a milestone on the road to regime change from within (May, 2011).

> By decreasing the U.S. reliance on these Middle Eastern imports, the United States
> has a greater capacity to pursue a foreign policy that is not subject to the whims of oil producers in the Persian Gulf … For far too long America's energy supply has relied upon regimes that are unstable and in many cases hostile to our interests. The Keystone XL pipeline is an important step to break this unhealthy situation while creating good-paying jobs at home (Reeves, 2011).

> The Keystone XL pipeline is good for the nation, and the American people agree … A strong infrastructure plan is particularly important as we are locked in a battle with OPEC to see who will supply energy to the United States in the future (Hoeven, 2015).

Such arguments then serve to push KXL beyond the realm of the mere economic, and into the more universally identifiable concerns of both national and international security. As mentioned in Chapter 4, flattering North Dakotans by placing them as key characters in the narrative of American exceptionalism is an oft-used and effective tactic for generating support the energy industry. Within such a narrative, industry apologists seek to create a simple, binary choice, between right and wrong and between good and evil, with international dictators and nebulous terrorist groups in far off, mystified regions often filling these roles.

Another major object of derision for security-minded writers was Vladimir Putin, who has long been viewed as one of the U.S.'s chief adversaries and a major threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East and Europe. During the 2008 election campaign, presidential candidate John McCain referred to Russia as "fueled by petro-dollars that has basically become a KGB apparatchik-run government" (Reuters, 2008). Arguments for KXL and against Putin reflected this animosity, with Russia cast as the Cold War communist villain. The editors at the MDN argued that by not approving KXL and exporting its oil, Obama was forcing our European allies into the hands of Putin, a cruel man who was punishing these states by withholding oil and gas due to their support of Ukraine's Western-backed government (Minot Daily News Editorial Board, 2014b). Similarly, Grand Forks Herald editor Tom Dennis (writing in the DP), argued that Obama's foot dragging was completely unnecessary as he would have bipartisan support in taking

on Putin. Moreover, he argued that it was in fact Putin who was the decisive one, seizing the opportunity to invade Ukraine and subsequently receiving no major pushback from the U.S. or the rest of the international community:

> The U.S. Senate has given Obama the opening he needs. The president should seize the moment and very publicly act … If the president acted fast on key energy issues, including Keystone, he easily could win bipartisan congressional support. That's the kind of unity that makes for second-guessing in the Kremlin, and that's the kind of decisiveness Ukraine and America's other allies need (Dennis, 2014).

In summary, security arguments pushed KXL beyond the realm of mere good economic sense, recasting it as a vital project without which the U.S., and therefore the "free world", will be far less safe. Such a tactic then framed opposition to KXL as not only a classic case of environmentalists selfishly standing in the way of free market growth, but also as weak on national security and, at worst, disloyal to the United States and its interests.

5.3.3.3. KXL as a bipartisan project

Although political support for the oil and gas industry was generally framed as a conservative and Republican domain, many Democratic politicians from conservative states, especially those from oil-producing states strongly supported KXL. In fact, support for KXL was seen as such a necessity for oil-state Democrats that following the 2014 midterm elections, a vote to force approval of XKL was hastily called in the U.S. Congress to bolster the chances of incumbent Sen. Mary Landrieu in her upcoming runoff election (Barron-Lopez, 2014). Although such a strategy both failed to pass the motion or to earn Landrieu re-election, it demonstrated how strongly politicians felt support for or opposition

to KXL was for their political fortunes. The potential power of this narrative was not lost on KXL supporters who framed KXL as a bipartisan project (despite limited support from the majority of national Democrats) and opponents as obstructionists:

> The news that Hoeven, Heitkamp and Sen. Mary Landrieu had failed to get the 60 supporters needed to pass the legislation written by Hoeven was disappointing in North Dakota, where the pipeline remains popular and where it would be used to transport crude oil from the Bakken to refineries in Houston (Minot Daily News Editorial Board, 2014c).

Many KXL supporters in this bipartisan framing felt that Obama's delay and ultimate rejection of KXL was foolish and merely a form of pandering to liberal interest groups. The fact that various XKL approval measures have received backing from all Senate Republicans and approximately one quarter of Senate Democrats was cited to support this claim and used an example of politicians' attempts to overcome partisan gridlock and make the federal government "work" again. North Dakota's Republican senator, John Hoeven, wrote a series of op-eds both before and after the 2015 Obama rejection, each one lauding "the bill I introduced" and its "44 co-sponsors" (2012, 2015). Hoeven, who in the 2012 article also referenced "our bill" (in reference to all of the co-sponsors), argued that Obama was directly and unreasonably standing in the way of progress, and going against his own party, because the Department of State under his own administration had cleared the way for KXL to be built. Such arguments were also mentioned by the editors of the FF, who lauded attempts by Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D), the bill's other principal sponsor, to tone-police arguments made by anti-KXL Democrats in favor of a "why can't we all just get along" approach, the result of which would have been

passing the bill. Heitkamp was elevated to the role of a veritable Superwoman, waging a brave, Dakota-values infused quest to single-handedly solve “Washington” problems:

> One speech can’t by itself change the mess in the Senate. But it can begin an evolution from today’s bitterly partisan mud pit to restoration of the comity that is supposed to distinguish the U.S. Senate as the greatest deliberative body in the world. If Sen. Heitkamp can play a part in that process, she can be proud of her work. And North Dakotans can be proud of her (Fargo Forum Editorial Board, 2014b).

This same sentiment was expressed by Heitkamp herself, who, in an editorial in the FF, stated that “President Barack Obama's decision to reject the Keystone XL pipeline is the wrong decision, and another example of what's wrong with politics and Washington these days. It's time to put partisanship aside, do what's right for the country and build this pipeline” (Heitkamp, 2012).

Thus, this focus on supposed “bipartisan” agreement, the only logical result of which is the approval and construction of KXL, becomes yet another way to hammer the Obama administration and further narratives of liberal jealousy and intransigence as the major reasons for the pipeline’s delay. These narratives were reinforced in several articles citing the “44 Republicans, 9 Democrats” statistic, featuring titles such as “Obama is out of excuses” (Minot Daily News Editorial Board, 2013) and “Taking a Big Step Backward” (Minot Daily News Editorial Board, 2014a), all of which sought to place the blame for KXL’s failure on “Washington” liberals, while celebrating the brave Republicans and minority of Democrats seeking to approve the pipeline, the bravest among them being North Dakota’s senators Hoeven and Heitkamp. Railing against “partisanship”, therefore,

serves the purpose of reinforcing the superiority of the common-sense “North Dakota Way” over the smug, profligate “Washington Way.”

5.3.3.4. KXL represents little-to-no environmental risk

A separate, yet related, argument to human health and safety frequently made by KXL supporters was that KXL posed little to no risk to the environment, whether through stimulating oil production (and therefore emissions) or through any sort of contamination due to spills, leaks or other pipeline accidents. While most of these arguments cited State Department assessments to make their case (mentioned in 12 of 13 articles on this topic), there was also a strong current of anti-environmentalism present, with skeptical statements made regarding climate change and the environmentalist movement in general. The general thrust of many of these arguments was that if it were not for the meddlesome environmentalist movement and their insincere, or supposedly false, objections, KXL would have been approved long ago.

A case in point was DP editor Korrie Wenzel, who argued that KXL opponents were displaying selective outrage against KXL and Sandpiper despite purported clearance from the State Department and other regulatory agencies because “environmentalists have realized that they just can’t stop oil use, so they instead are putting their focus on the infrastructure that delivers the oil to points around the world. If the beast cannot be stopped, then gum up the beast’s lifeline” (Wenzel, 2015). Similar sentiments were echoed by writers from the Grand Forks Herald (publishing in the DP), arguing that environmentalists are standing in the way of KXL by “crowing about environmental concerns and worries that proponents are exaggerating the number and

importance of the jobs involved." The authors continue by comparing the progress of XKL with that of the Interstate Highway system, a project that has been very important to the economy of North Dakota while contributing thousands of "temporary" jobs. Since attacking highways was unthinkable, the authors argued, so too should attacking KXL and other pipelines (Grand Forks Herald Editorial Board, 2015). This was a continuation from a previous attack about the insincerity of protestors and their distraction from "real" environmental issues:

> There's a story that anti-Keystone activists should remember before they launch yet another round of anti-pipeline claims. It's the story of the boy who cried "Wolf!" The boy's alarm mobilized the town, but no wolf could be found. Then the pattern repeated itself again and again. Before long, the townspeople stopped trusting the boy. And he regretted that fact mightily when a real wolf bounded onto the scene (Grand Forks Herald Editorial Board, 2014).

As above, while authors note that there are legitimate concerns about the safety of pipelines, but they were miniscule compared to those posed by transporting oil by rail or truck. Moreover, any potential damage was the cost of oil-related growth that funded the lifestyle that many Dakotans enjoyed. Thus, opposing KXL on environmental grounds (something that many pro-KXL writers consider foolish from an objective standpoint) is not only deeply antithetical to the pragmatic, pro-business and anti-government culture of North Dakota, but also selfish and hypocritical, two mortal sins under the doctrine of the North Dakota Way.

5.3.3.5. KXL opposition is anti-Canadian

While many KXL supporters argued that opponents are anti-Dakotan (and by extension, anti-American), another strain of writers showed that opposition to KXL is effectively a form of stealth anti-Canadianism. These arguments are based on three major premises: Canada is the United States' (especially North Dakota's) geographically closest neighbor (Mexico does not receive such recognition) and one of its major military and cultural allies; support for Canada is vital for creating pan-North American solidarity and security; and allowing Canadian oil and gas to bypass America is both an economic and diplomatic tragedy and symbolic of American weakness. Each of these rationales is rooted in notions of Canada and its resources being instrumental to the United States' national security, thus rejecting KXL is akin to rejecting Canada as a whole and therefore putting America at risk.

Much of the writing harping on this theme argued that by not approving KXL, "Washington" (i.e. Obama) was both destabilizing a longstanding relationship with Canada and simultaneously driving much needed oil into the hands of the Chinese, a convenient foil because of fears about the decline of American hegemony and the rise of Communism. Obama was, yet again, the major target for columnists. DP editor Tom Dennis sought to contrast Obama's decision making regarding the raid that killed Osama Bin Laden with that regarding KXL, arguing that Obama's decisiveness in the former situation ("this president's finest hour") was the exact opposite of his indecisiveness towards the latter ("a timidity that borders on cowardice") and a giant black mark on his legacy as one willing to "put his political fortune on the line in defense of the national

interest." Dennis concluded by arguing that in addition to harming national security, abandoning KXL was, "an insult … to our neighbor to the North" (Dennis, 2014). Similarly, the MDN placed the blame for any delays in KXL construction squarely on Obama:

> Obama insists more studies are needed. That is rubbish, and the president knows it. His opposition to the pipeline is purely political. Never mind the very real consequences of not building it. They include depriving Americans of oil from a reliable ally, Canada, as well as encouraging that country to sell the oil abroad, possibly to China (Minot Daily News Editorial Board, 2015).

In an earlier editorial, Sen. Heitkamp sought to frame this possibility as a certainty, arguing that because Canadian oil production is both inevitable and beyond amounts Canada uses domestically, Canada has no choice not to sell it, and banning KXL leaves China as the only acceptable option (Heitkamp, 2012). These sentiments were also echoed by Michael Reeves, president of the Ports-to-Plains Alliance, whose stated goal is to support tri-national trade between the three North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) nations by lobbying for the development of overland trade through the U.S. Great Plains, which the company refers to as, "securing the benefits of commerce to North America's energy and agricultural heartland" (Ports-to-Plains Alliance, 2018). Thus, for Reeves, whose organization receives funding directly from the Government of Alberta, KXL and related Plains oil infrastructure are key to both boosting development along the trans-continental trade corridor and shoring up our "comforting" relationship with Canada, the added bonus of which is sticking North America's collective thumb in the eye of "hostile" and "unstable" regimes (Reeves, 2011).

This rhetoric provided an interesting counterpoint to much popular nationalist rhetoric that paints Canada as somewhat of a backwards, effeminate, “socialist” cousin to the strong, militaristic, free-market United States (Allan, 2009). Indeed, in these pro-KXL arguments, Canada and its oil industry are a bulwark against Islamist terrorism, Anti-American despotism and Chinese economic expansion. Also lingering unwritten behind this strident, pro-Canadian rhetoric is the key role that Canadian trade and tourism play in North Dakota’s economy. Business Roundtable (2013) notes that North Dakota’s expanding agricultural and petroleum industries, proximity to the border and trade liberalization under NAFTA have allowed North Dakota to become a premiere import/export and tourism destination for Canadians, ranking in the top 20 of all US states on both measures despite being ranked 48th and 45th, respectively, in terms of population size and total economic output. Foreign exports of North Dakota goods and services have grown from ~$700 million/year in 1999 to ~$5.3 billion in 2016, with exports to Canada in particular seeing tremendous growth as both a function of real dollar amounts and a percentage of total exports, from ~340 million in 1999 (49% of total exports) to ~$4.4 billion in 2016 (83% of total exports) (United States International Trade Administration, 2018). Furthermore, North Dakota (and Minot, specifically) have become major retail destinations for shoppers from neighboring Saskatchewan and Manitoba (Rattray, 2015). Thus, in addition to the strong impetus to support Canada (as embodied through KXL) for broader - and sometimes less tangible - economic and security reasons, North Dakota-based writers have a host of local, concrete reasons to argue for KXL on Canadian grounds.

5.3.4. Arguments against KXL

The arguments against KXL trended less toward national security and more toward the environment. Many of the expected environmental concerns about the pipeline such as leaks/spills, broad-scale contamination and climate change impacts featured strongly among KXL opponents. However, writers also sought to address some of the local political aspects of KXL, arguing that politicians, the majority of whom were Republican, were acting more for the benefit of oil-industry allies than for their constituents.

The five most prevalent objections to KXL were:

1. KXL presents significant environmental risk (20 articles).
2. Political leaders negotiating KXL, especially Republicans, are corrupt (20 articles).
3. KXL will be a prelude to export of American oil and gas (17 articles).
4. KXL is a net negative for energy security (15 articles).
5. KXL will raise gas prices (11 articles).[19]

Many of these arguments run contrary to those advanced by pro-KXL writers, in that they focus far more on the domestic, everyday ramifications of KXL, rather than high-level political machinations or international geopolitics. Thus, these arguments point to a localization of the KXL struggle that seeks to go beyond questions of how much oil is being transported and by whom.

[19] Objections 1, 2 and 4 will receive their own subsections, while arguments 3 and 5 will be combined into one subsection due to significant overlap.

5.3.4.1. KXL is environmentally risky

Many KXL opponents were animated by what they saw as false claims about the project's environmental impact in North Dakota, correctly noting that KXL will not directly pass through North Dakota and that it will not be a significant spur to existing Bakken crude pipelines. Writers instead sought to address two separate areas of concern: the challenges that KXL places to the Plains environment at large and some potential challenges that KXL might pose to North Dakota in particular.

Many writers worried about the specific type of oil (oil sands) that was being transported and the increased risks that it poses over more traditional crudes.[20] Oil sands reflect their name, being a mixture of sand, clay, water and an extremely thick, sludgy and sour form of oil known as bitumen. These sands are so "heavy" and flow-resistant that they must be heated while still in the ground to allow extraction. Thus, recovered oil sands are extremely difficult and expensive to transport when compared to conventional crude, even after many of the non-petroleum components are removed in a process referred to as upgrading (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2017). Writers specifically felt that the oil's extreme sourness (which leads to corrosion) and its heaviness made it especially dangerous to transport due to an increased likelihood of leaks and difficulties in spill remediation. Multiple writers echoed each other nearly word for word about how oil-sands-based oil was "toxic" (Gay, 2011; Evenson, 2014b; Altenbernd, 2015), "highly

[20] Although Bakken oil and gas is considered unconventional due to its being extracted via horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, once the crude is extracted it is considered to be among the purest forms of light, sweet crude, meaning that it is a largely free-flowing liquid (light) and contains very little hydrogen sulfide (sweet). Such crudes fetch a market premium as they are easier to transport and refine.

corrosive" and "sinks in water" (J. Richardson, 2012b; Larsen, 2014, 2015a, b; Evenson, 2014b) and is among the dirtiest, most environmentally damaging petroleum source in the world (Hulse, 2011; Gay, 2011; LaDuke, 2014; J. Moen, 2012). While there were various opinions among this group about oil pipelines as a whole, all of the writers sought to show that KXL and its contents (refined oil sands potentially mixed with conventional crude) had the potential to create a far greater environmental and human safety disaster than nearly any other conventional oil and gas pipeline.

Chief among these writers' fears was groundwater contamination, which would threaten both household and agricultural water users. However, writers tended to focus on two separate sites of potential contamination: the Ogallala Aquifer (which underlies much of KXL's proposed route through the Plains) and the Yellowstone-Missouri River system (which KXL crosses at two separate points in Montana). The former water source served as a rallying cry against KXL more generally, with writers being specifically motivated by the threats posed to the ways of life of fellow Plains agriculturalists outside of North Dakota. Discussions regarding the latter water source served to emphasize the potential environmental risks that KXL might pose to North Dakota despite bypassing the state completely.

The Ogallala Aquifer covers portions of 8 Plains states (North Dakota is not among them) and is a significant source of both drinking water and agricultural water for residents of the region.[21] Given that KXL crosses through Ogallala at several points along its route

[21] It is estimated that nearly 1/3 of all irrigated land in the United States is situated on top of – and draws water from – the Ogallala Aquifer (Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2012). The Aquifer is also estimated to supply drinking water to 82%of residents in the High Plains region (United States Geological Survey, 2000).

(including the heart of the aquifer in Nebraska), writers argued that pipeline leaks – depending upon size – could result in significant localized and/or regional damage to both groundwater and surface land covers such as crops or surface water. Perennial candidate Tom Potter (D), who briefly ran against Sen. Heitkamp in the 2012 primary to provide a counterweight to her pro-KXL stance, argued that the pipeline was being rushed through solely on economic grounds, without proper attention given to the threats posed to Ogallala: “The potential for a devastating pipeline accident in that region must be part of the risk/reward analysis included in the process of deciding whether or not to build the pipeline. This is the kind of analysis that cannot be rushed” (Potter, 2012). A similar objection was raised by a CCW, who argued that boosters were purposely overinflating job numbers in order to force KXL through over environmental concerns:

> I was dismayed on the morning of Sept. 12 when I opened The Forum and saw a pro-Keystone XL pipeline advertisement about how the construction of the pipeline would lead to the creation of 600,000 jobs … Tar sands oil is among the dirtiest fuels on earth, and a spill along the pipeline's route would be catastrophic for American farmers and residents in the region, fish and wildlife, and the food supply … so yes, the construction of this pipeline would create jobs, but the extreme destruction that would come about from the pipeline's construction would far outweigh this benefit (Gay, 2011).

Collin Evenson, a local farmer CCW and veteran anti-KXL activist, sought to further elucidate the rushed nature of the pipeline, arguing that the use of cheap, Chinese steel (which, he believes is being dishonestly sold to the public as American-made) will push the specter of leaks from “if” to “when”: “The pipeline will cross Nebraska over one of North America’s largest aquifers, the Ogallala Aquifer. When the pipeline fractures, the toxic tar will sink into one of our most important water sources” (Evenson, 2014b).

Many writers expressing concern about the contamination of Ogallala were also motivated by the potential devastation of the rural, agricultural Plains way of life (see the quotation from Gay in the preceding paragraph), something that many rural CCWs felt was already under way across the region due to mounting pressures from the oil and coal industries, rural depopulation and a lack of interest in farm life and culture. In a separate article following Obama's now-overturned decision to cancel KXL, the above-mentioned Collin Evenson sought to draw connections to – and express solidarity with – the threats faced by Nebraska farmers along the KXL route and those faced by North Dakota farmers in the Bakken:

> Proponents say it will reduce train traffic of oil cars through cities like Fargo and Devils Lake. The pipeline would do that because it would be … replacing 800,000 barrels of Bakken oil … One forgotten issue is the more than 100 landowners, ranchers and farmers in Nebraska and South Dakota that don't want to have the pipeline transporting toxic tar through their land over the Ogallala Aquifer. The bill Sens. John Hoeven and Heidi Heitkamp are pushing would allow a private company from Canada to claim eminent domain over land owners in the United States … I talked to one farmer who turned down a $250,000 offer to have the Keystone XL pipeline cross his land. He did not want the risk of toxic tar ruining his family farm. They threatened him with eminent domain. What is Heidi Heitkamp going to say to him about landowner rights if her bill gets passed over the veto? (Evenson, 2015a).

This theme of violation of property rights, which, as mentioned in (section 1.a.i (placeholder for final numbering scheme)) is viewed by many North Dakotans as the bedrock of rural independence, was expounded upon by several additional writers. One CCW felt that TransCanada's use of eminent domain was an attack on rural property rights, but also both an erosion of American sovereignty and a way for the company to avoid responsibility in the event of a KXL accident: "I find it troubling that a foreign country,

even friendly Canada, will be given the power to impose eminent domain on American soil. The first oil spill should be interesting to watch when the responsible party is a foreign entity" (Altenbernd, 2015). Long-time Native American environmental activist and former Green Party vice-presidential candidate Winona LaDuke related the struggles of rural farmers (especially South Dakota's Native population) with KXL (a usurpation by an outside identity) to the legend of the Black Snake, an outside force that, much like a giant serpent, brings destruction to the land. LaDuke argued that Native Americans have often invoked the Black Snake as a metaphor against socioeconomic and environmental challenges posed by the United States and Canadian governments, especially when these threats, KXL included, violate existing land tenure agreements (LaDuke, 2014).[22] These general feelings of violation and dispossession were well summarized by a CCW from Fargo: "Are we a petro-colony now that has to risk our vital water resources for a couple hundred post-construction jobs?" (J. Richardson, 2012b).

The notions of petro-colonialism extended to arguments about the potential local effects of KXL in North Dakota through potential contamination of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers. While KXL crosses both of these rivers at separate junctures several hundred miles west and upstream of North Dakota in Montana, these two rivers converge soon after entering North Dakota and are a significant source of drinking and agricultural water for the western and central portions of the state (US Army Corps of Engineers, 2017). Although it is not clear what the effects of a KXL spill might be on communities

[22] For further background on the Black Snake legend and its connection to KXL, see Moe (2014). The Black Snake legend has also been applied more recently to the struggle against Dakota Access (Harris, 2017).

significantly downstream, much of this fear appears to be a reflection of past negative experiences with spills – some of which have entered the Missouri and other water sources - related to both the existing Keystone Phase 1 (which traverses North Dakota north to south in the eastern third of the state) and the industry more generally. Phase 1 was a specific point of contention, as several writers felt that its purportedly poor safety record would be replicated by KXL. Fargo-based activist and rural memoirist Dean Hulse (2012) criticized what he viewed as a hypocritical push on the part of normally progressive labor unions to fast track KXL in the name of jobs, noting that a recent editorial in the FF by a Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) staffer (Mackey, 2012) had ignored all of the spills related to Phase 1 (much of which was constructed by LIUNA-affiliated workers). In an earlier editorial, Hulse (2011) also noted that TransCanada received a Corrective Action Order (CAO) (the most severe safety violation US-based pipeline operators can receive) for a 2011 Phase 1 spill in Southwestern North Dakota, arguing that this proves the unreliability of the Keystone system given that pipelines subject to CAOs have been 45 years old on average. These safety concerns were echoed by another writer, who noted that former TransCanada employees had exposed the poor quality of construction materials and the lax health and safety culture endemic to Phase 1's construction (Sherman, 2012). Gay (2011) expressed similar skepticism, noting that TransCanada's promises to use "state-of-the-art technology" when building and monitoring KXL lacked substance, given that these same claims were also made about Phase 1, which she felt had a weak first-year safety record.

In addition to these Keystone-specific issues, writers were wary of yet another pipeline being built across the Yellowstone-Missouri system, given two recent spills: a

2011 spill from the Exxon Mobil Silvertip pipeline released over 60,000 gallons into the Yellowstone, while a 2015 spill from the Poplar pipeline spilled over 50,000 gallons and contaminated the drinking water supply for the city of Glendive, Montana (pop. ~5,000). Editorials written after the 2011 spill, but prior to the 2015 spill, often did not mention that spill by name, but often mentioned potential contamination of the Yellowstone-Missouri by the especially disastrous "tar sands." Many of these editorials argued that such a spill from KXL would have the same effect on North Dakota's water supply and broader environment as the 2010 Kalamazoo River spill, which released ~1 million gallons of upgraded oil sands and has led to over $1 billion in ongoing remediation efforts (National Resource Damage Assessment and Research Program, 2018). Gay (2011) argued that both the 2011 Yellowstone (river system-crossing) and 2010 Kalamazoo (oil sands) spills, "show the dangers of this type of pipeline [KXL]." LaDuke (2013a), argued that, in the event of a similar incident, rural North Dakota would likely not receive the same level of attention or recovery funding as urban Kalamazoo, given it being a politically-unimportant "low population zone." Another CCW somewhat echoed LaDuke's notion of North Dakota's rurality posing a challenge to cleanup, but also argued that North Dakota was especially vulnerable due to its landscape – and its rural, non-"Washington" population - being unspoiled:

> The pipeline will not enter North Dakota, but it will cross the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers, which flow into pristine Lake Sakakawea. Heavy, dense semifluid tar sands oil sinks in water, rendering surface oil containment skimmers nonfunctional. The lake is a boating and fishing paradise, and a source of drinking water for many municipalities. Why are the senators supporting such environmentally unsound, dangerous legislation? Aren't they proud, native, ecological North Dakotans? Why are they willing to continue gambling with our unspoiled cultural heritage? (Larsen, 2015a).

Indeed, Larsen's exhortation is yet another in a line of attempts to reorient the notion of a "true" North Dakotan away from one who blindly supports industry and political authority, and towards one who respects North Dakota's rural heritage, the two pillars of which are the environment and private property.

To summarize, environmentally-minded critics have argued that it violates the more fundamental tenets of rural self-sufficiency, individual liberties (especially property rights) and community cohesion. Many were especially careful to point out that while it is unlikely North Dakota will face severe risks from KXL, it was irresponsible to proceed with a project that offered few tangible benefits, especially to Bakken residents not working in the oil industry, and that compromises the livelihoods of Plains residents who live and work more directly along the pipeline's route. As we will see in our next section, many KXL opponents advanced the argument advanced by Larsen (2015a) in the preceding paragraph and questioned why politicians were so enthusiastic about a project that appeared to offer few true positives and many potential negatives.

5.3.4.2. Politicians supporting KXL are corrupt

As discussed in (section 2.a), support for KXL has been seen as an article of faith among nearly all federal-level Republicans, as well as most centrist Democrats from Red states, while most Blue-state Democrats have been opposed. While much rationale has been provided by Dakota-based supporters as to why KXL is necessary, many KXL critics have remained skeptical as to the motives of state- and federal-level North Dakota politicians, given that KXL, even by many supporters' admissions, is likely to have a

minimal direct impact on North Dakota. Thus, the general opinion of KXL opponents was that most Dakota politicians supported KXL for the benefit of their own political careers and not for their constituents of the state of North Dakota.

KXL critics felt that North Dakota's U.S. Senators Heitkamp (D) and Hoeven (R) were purposely misleading the public about the benefits of KXL to manufacture support for its approval. Specifically, writers felt that Hoeven, in particular, was playing up the notion of KXL transporting Bakken crude to distract from the overall market displacement Bakken oil would suffer from KXL. Evenson (2015b), who believed that such displacement will lead to massive layoffs in the oil patch, felt Hoeven was insincere about KXL's potential for creating economic growth, arguing that Hoeven should instead support infrastructure projects that would benefit North Dakota's existing industries. These concerns were echoed by a Bismarck-based CCW (Stites, 2013, 2015), who felt Hoeven and Heitkamp were hypocritical for supporting KXL, while abandoning the now-cancelled Bakken-only pipelines proposed by Koch Industries and ONEOK. Stites argued that supporting these publicly unknown pipelines was not politically useful, as they were not part of the national energy conversation and did not allow for attacks on Obama and "Washington." Another CCW (J. Richardson, 2012a, b) argued that Hoeven and state-level Republicans were deliberately using confusion sowed by the media about the differences between KXL, Sandpiper and other unrelated pipelines in order to tout Bakken producers' supposed role in supplying crude to KXL. Richardson felt that Hoeven's claims of certainty regarding Bakken crude transport were nothing more than a cover to distract from KXL's negative effects on the Bakken: "My guess is there is no such deal … Without such a binding agreement, this is all political vapor that could send Canadian crude to

Texas [and then] to China. Good deal for Texas refineries, nothing to us" (J. Richardson, 2012a).

Several writers targeted Hoeven for his supposed loyalty to deep-pocketed campaign donors and foreign oil interests. Gustafson (2014) felt that Hoeven's strong support from American oil companies was leading him to push KXL, despite his knowing full well that it would have a negative impact on the Bakken:

> What has supporting the pipeline done for Hoeven? As the lead proponent for an out-of-state pipeline that won't help North Dakota crude producers, it's helped him earn more than $300,000 in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry in the past five years, according to OpenSecrets.org. But I'm sure that's just a coincidence. Right? (Gustafson, 2014).

Echoing this theme, two CCWs (Hulse, 2015; D. Richardson, 2015) argued that Hoeven was indebted to the Koch Brothers, whom both writers pointed out were significant stakeholders in Alberta oil sands production. Hulse, though, also argued that Koch donations were of little importance compared to those made by foreign oil sands investors seeking to profit from KXL moving oil to American, and potentially Asian, markets, the latter of which Hulse felt would undermine attempts to create domestic energy independence. This foreign meddling theme was elevated to near-conspiracy levels by Evenson (2014b) and Larsen (2015a), who felt that Hoeven and other congressional Republicans were being tricked by the Canadian government into accepting a dangerous pipeline that Canadian residents, who have fought fiercely against cross-Canada tar sounds pipelines, were smart enough to reject due to their understanding of the environmental and climate risks. Larsen even went as far as to pose the dubious rhetorical question, "Is the Canadian government dictating American foreign policy?",

demonstrating his frustration with what he viewed as Hoeven's seemingly endless use of patronizing talking points minimizing KXL's potential damage to the American environment and existential risk to Bakken crude production.

Despite these relentless assaults on Hoeven and the Republicans, Heitkamp, too, was severely criticized by KXL opponents. Many opponents of KXL felt that she, as a Democrat, should have joined her party in taking a bolder position against KXL. Tom Potter (2012), Heitkamp's former primary challenger who made KXL opposition a centerpiece of his campaign, felt that she was only supporting KXL as a matter of opportunism, in that it was the easiest way to gain popularity among the Republican-leaning North Dakota voters she would need to defeat her Republican challenger in a Red State. Another CCW, Christopher Nelson (2012), a declared Heitkamp supporter, accused Heitkamp of deliberately parroting debunked Republican talking points regarding KXL's effect on job growth (which he compared to the effect of building a Super Walmart) in order to give the appearance of being a tough-minded independent unafraid to take on Obama. Similarly, LaDuke (2013a) raised concerns about Heitkamp's boasting about her partnerships with the Canadian ambassador to the United States and Gov. Dave Heineman (R-Nebraska) over their shared desire to fast-track KXL approval. LaDuke instead felt that the two should embrace wind energy over oil, chiding Heitkamp in particular given her supposed commitments to progressivism and bold action on climate-related issues:

> In short, you've got a dysfunctional set of climate choices that Heitkamp and Heineman are trying to push through because they drank bad economic Kool-Aid. Heitkamp and Heineman have astounding opportunities. North Dakota and Nebraska are some pretty sweet undeveloped wind regimes.

> Heitkamp will be in office for six years, but her decisions will affect countless generations. She has an opportunity to do something visionary and courageous (LaDuke, 2013a).

Many KXL critics echoed these themes, with the general tenor being that Heitkamp was squandering a chance to move North Dakota forward by aligning herself with the same set of policies that she claimed to be opposing in her electoral campaign.

Critics also felt that the public bipartisanship of Hoeven and Heitkamp was disconcerting. Rather than praise this cooperation, as many KXL supporters did, KXL opponents argued that it was emblematic of their true loyalty not to their parties or their constituents, but to their big-oil backers. Evenson (2014b) and Hulse (2015) separately asserted that such contributions negatively impacted Hoeven and Heitkamp's judgment, causing them to push questionable claims about topics such as the Baker, Montana spur and KXL's potential to create jobs. Hulse, obviously skeptical of such promises, made a folksy allusion to his rural upbringing to describe the pair's "olfactory moments": "As a former farm boy, I can recall my Saturdays with Dad when we'd clean the barn. After a while, I stopped noticing the smell" (Hulse, 2015). With an equally dry wit, former State Rep. Ray Meyer (D-Bismarck) mocked the senators' repeated declarations about KXL being "shovel ready": "It is time for politicians of both political parties to quit shoveling smoke and be honest with the people. We may not be as stupid as they seem to think we are" (Meyer, 2013).

Other critics, however, thought Hoeven and Heitkamp's faux-bipartisanship was no laughing matter. J. Richardson cautioned the pair and other North Dakota politicians, "awash with petro dollars," to "stop trying to fool the public on Keystone XL" (J.

Richardson, 2012b), while D. Richardson went a step further, exhorting the senators to, “Stop lying about (fake) jobs and oil independence. It is about money, pure and simple, and everything else isn’t that important.” Along these same lines, LaDuke (2014) questioned Hoeven and Heitkamp’s “vision and long-term commitment to the state” do to their prioritizing of short-term gains from KXL over their state’s residents’ long-term prosperity and wellbeing. This critique was then brought to a familiar conclusion by Stites (2015) who was disappointed that the senators had, “chosen politics over focusing on meaningful solutions” declaring this was, “not the North Dakota way.”

Thus, what was perhaps most disappointing to KXL critics was not so much that politicians such as Hoeven and Heitkamp supported the pipeline (predictable given the pervasiveness of the oil and gas lobby), but that they were so willing to continuously push dubious, and often outright false, claims to do so. Given that many of these dishonest politicians were also strong proponents of “real American” values and standing up to the “Washington” consensus, their hypocrisy and self-serving behavior was doubly irritating. Indeed, while critics had likely come to expect this behavior from Hoeven and other Republicans, there was palpable anger with Heitkamp, whom many expected to better reflect the anti-KXL mood of many federal Democrats, or at least maintain a healthy skepticism of such grandiose claims about the project as she has since come to endorse. Such status-quo-affirming conduct from Heitkamp thus served as a final blow to the hopes of many KXL opponents, who yet again felt betrayed by politicians unwilling to take a stand against the destructive largesse of the fossil fuel industry.

5.3.4.3. KXL is a prelude to US oil export and/or higher gas prices

Although North Dakota has seen unprecedented levels of oil production due to the fracking boom, many critics on both sides of the pro-/anti- divide have argued the Bakken is at a tremendous disadvantage compared to other oil-producing regions in North America because of its distance from major refining centers and having a lack of transportation infrastructure. Many KXL opponents in the sample argued that due to Bakken oil being "stranded" and isolated from markets, projects such as KXL, which put the Bakken at a further competitive disadvantage, should be rejected. KXL, in particular, was seen as emblematic of this trend, as writers felt that it would directly displace Bakken oil, with the supposed Baker, Montana spur seen as a corrupt bargain intended to pacify politicians and Bakken producers. Moreover, this foreign intrusion into the domestic midstream sector was viewed as an inevitable prelude to the rolling back of the decades' long prohibition on export of US-based crude oil, which occurred in December 2015, after the majority of sampled articles were published.[23] The spillover effect of the ban's end was seen as an increase in retail gasoline prices due to competition with European and Asian markets willing to pay a premium for this newly available fuel source. This prospect was seen as bitterly disappointing for many critics who felt that North Dakota already paid exorbitantly high prices.[24] Both of these major quibbles (the prelude to export and the

[23] It is important to note that the ban did not cover refined gasoline, which was already being exported at record levels in the year before the ban was overturned (Plumer, 2014).

[24] This claim is largely not born out by data from major gas price tracking services, which show that retail prices in North Dakota for the 10-year period from September 1, 2007 – September 1, 2017 have been roughly equal to, if not slightly lower than, the national average price (American Automobile Association, 2017).

increase in gas prices) were so intertwined, that this section will approach the two arguments together.

Although many critics writing prior to December 2015 noted that the export ban was likely to be overturned for a variety of reasons (waning domestic demand, huge oversupplies due to the fracking boom, higher prices in foreign markets, etc.), they argued that KXL would help finalize the decision as it would bypass Midwestern refineries and storage areas in favor of those on the Gulf Coast, which were seen as already being re-oriented for the exports. Several critics repeated the oft-used, though questionable, talking point that the Keystone terminus (a separate, non-XL expansion of the system completed in 2014) was (being) built in the Port Arthur, Texas, Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) so that petroleum companies doing business there could avoid normal tax rules.[25] Hulse (2015), for example, stated that KXL will transport oil sands "through America's heartland to the U.S. Gulf Coast, where it will be refined and sold. If sold in a foreign trade zone, the products would not be subject to U.S. taxes." Similarly, Brandt (2013) argued in a confusingly worded statement that Valero was seeking to exploit Port Arthur's FTZ status to bypass US taxes and regulations, thus making KXL an even worse economic blunder

[25] This claim was first advanced by Oil Change International (2011), a left-wing pressure group, who claimed to have clandestinely obtained internal documents from a Valero Energy investor conference which outlined that company's export strategy and financial stake in the Keystone system. There has been major debate regarding the validity of this report and its claims (see Richardson, 2012; American Petroleum Institute, 2012; Swift, 2011), however, it should be noted that nearly all Gulf Coast refineries are located near FTZs and petroleum imports from Canada already have low import duties under NAFTA (Parilla, 2017). Thus, while there are perhaps other economic reasons to locate at Port Arthur, the Port Arthur FTZ is not an exceptional Gulf Coast port and its FTZ status is likely not the major reason TransCanada chose it for the Keystone terminus. While Valero itself has made conflicting statements about its export goals, in an email to the Daily Signal, the media arm of the conservative Heritage Foundation, it did not deny that it sees Alberta oil sands delivered via Keystone as a key replacement for declining heavy oil supplies from Mexico and Venezuela (Markay, 2011).

than other pipelines: “Valero, the key recipient of that oil [Alberta oil sands from Keystone] has said it plans to ship that oil to a foreign market, since they are a foreign entity and the money coming from it will be tax free to that company.”

Hulse and Brandt’s arguments were echoed by other writers, who took on an even more paranoid tone, arguing that KXL was being used by the aforementioned shadowy TransCanada-Koch Brothers-“Foreign” cabal (see section ii) to push China-bound energy exports of all sorts at the expense of the United States government and its citizens. Frequent letter writer J. Richardson (2012b) postulated that Middle Eastern interests were deliberately buying up “Gulf-area tax-free zone, export ready refineries,” in a plot to further their global market domination by forcing U.S. consumers to pay higher prices for gasoline by exporting KXL oil sands to China instead of re-selling it domestically. This point was seconded by Evenson (2014), who further argued that the Saudis were seeking to specifically damage Bakken producers by exporting oil sands to their own Saudi-based refineries and then selling the finished gasoline back to the US, thus making Bakken-derived gasoline more expensive. Others such as Chyle (2014) and Larsen (2014) felt that the Koch Brothers and TransCanada were accomplishing this goal well enough on their own, arguing that these groups were pushing KXL in order to block all possibility of Bakken-based refineries (thus safeguarding the profitability of their own infrastructure) while simultaneously achieving their ultimate goal of selling oil to “Communist China.” On a similar yet more sinister note, the prolific wordsmith Dean Hulse saw KXL as merely the first stage in a broader attempt to destabilize domestic commodity markets under the guise of energy independence:

> In Greek mythology, the beautiful Cassandra received the gift of prophecy, but when she refused Apollo, he caused her to be disbelieved. In other words, Cassandra could see the future, but no one believed her, even though she spoke the truth … Greek mythology has been replaced by greed mythology … the promise, coming from politicians and others, of "energy independence" is a lie, unless the United States is willing to be the highest bidder. And not only with respect to oil: Profit-maximizing fossil fuel barons also are intent on exporting U.S. natural gas and even coal (Hulse, 2013a).

Others, writing in more staid terms, expressed concern about what they viewed as misleading claims being used to obscure the secret end run around export restrictions. Davis (2014) felt that pipeline *versus* rail arguments being used to push KXL were disingenuous, as he felt transport of Bakken crude to the Gulf Coast, either for refining or export, was neither inevitable nor desirable. Furthermore, he argued that as KXL met none of the stated goals of reducing gas prices, improving the Bakken economy or improving national security:

> How pleased are you about the prices of heating oil, gas at the pump, diesel or any other petroleum product you need in North Dakota? We have all heard the cry for the United States to become energy independent. We have also heard the cry to build the Keystone XL pipeline. The truth is, building the XL pipeline will not make the United States energy independent because our country is selling oil on the world market. Since the oil is in North Dakota, the smart and logical choice would be to build a refinery in North Dakota, a large refinery. How much sense does it make to send Bakken oil south where it's processed and then sent back north, where we pay the added cost? (Davis, 2014).

LaDuke (2013b) also sought to take on the notion of KXL being the Bakken's safest (and greenest) transport choice, arguing that any such gains in transit safety and emissions reductions attributable to KXL could also be made by better enforcing existing regulations. She also argued that such arguments were patently false, since reducing emissions in

North Dakota only to increase them through oil sands production and potential exports elsewhere was not a net positive: “North Dakota does not live in a bubble where we can claim greenhouse gas reductions within imaginary borders. … Enabling larger markets for more destructive oil projects and emissions is not a bragging right” (LaDuke, 2013b). Another CCW writer sought to upend what he saw as the entire farce surrounding who was actually benefiting from KXL by posing a very direct rhetorical question: “If the purpose of the pipeline is to provide oil for Americans, why is one of the ends of the line at a refinery at a deep-water port in Texas? It doesn't require a port to get oil to North Dakota” (Sherman, 2012).

Many of these same concerns about who benefited from sending Bakken crude (and oil sands) away from the Midwest animated the arguments of those more specifically concerned about gas prices. In particular, many were suspicious of the claim that shipping Bakken crude out of North Dakota would somehow improve the price situation within the state. Gustafson, who was strongly critical of the present Bakken situation, argued that KXL would do nothing but make life worse for oil patch residents:

> It won’t lower gas prices for Americans because it will make the oil easier to ship overseas. It won’t affect gas prices here in North Dakota because not even the unregulated fracking wasteland that is now western North Dakota has accomplished that … It will not help North Dakota oil producers earn more money, as they’ll get less for shipping it to the Gulf than they do shipping it to the East Coast currently (Gustafson, 2014).

Local activist Pat Hedstrup of Fryburg (location of a major rail terminal where Bakken crude would potentially be shipped to the Baker spur) viewed gas prices largely as a

function of supply and demand, arguing that increased exports, which she noted were already happening, will restrict domestic supply and increase price:

> The top export of the United States is now fuel -- gasoline, diesel and jet fuel. This explains why our gasoline and diesel fuel are so expensive. The more fuel is sent overseas, the less supply there is for the United States. In the first 10 months of 2011, the U.S. exported 848 million barrels of fuel and imported 750 million. Where is the energy independence in those numbers? What happened to reducing our dependence on foreign oil? (Hedstrup, 2012).

This argument was also advanced by C. Nelson (2012), who argued that due to the U.S. already being a net gasoline exporter, there was no reason to believe that KXL-carried oil sands would be earmarked for domestic use. However, perhaps the most emphatic argument against KXL as a reducer of fuel prices was CCW Jeanne Johnson. Johnson claims to have received a "push poll" from TransCanada, in which she was asked the following question: "Do you think gasoline prices are too high?" When she answered affirmatively, she was then told that KXL would bring down gas prices, followed by a question asking whether she then approved of KXL. Johnson described her disgust thusly:

> You think you've just answered an innocent survey, but you've actually been subjected to a subtle kind of advertising … In this reincarnation, the fake poll is pushing the listener to make a kind of psychic commitment to a project they probably don't understand …. Pipelines do not reduce gasoline prices. World demand for oil largely drives the price of gasoline. Independent oil analysts claim XL is clearly an end run around the less lucrative Upper Midwest refineries (Johnson, 2011).

To conclude her diatribe, Johnson offered this bit of sage advice: "When you get that call, JUST SAY NO [emphasis in original]."

Thus, the driving force behind many of the anti-KXL arguments center around the potential effects on exports and gas prices was the sense of being deceived. While this deception, depending upon the writer, ran the gamut from deceitful politicians to a nebulous, new world order-type cartel, it was clear from the statements made by many critics that they had little patience for specious arguments and easily disproven, “common sense” arguments. Writers were particularly irked by arguments which they felt over-inflated the Bakken’s role in supporting KXL, as they felt that the Bakken would likely suffer far more under KXL than would other oil-producing regions. When writing about the specific problems KXL would cause for the Bakken economy, critics repeated facets of the core charge they had leveled against disingenuous politicians: KXL critics have been fooled (or cajoled via financial inducements) into effectively underwriting North Dakota’s demise. This notion of demise will also play a strong role in the arguments advanced in our next subsection on KXL’s supposed damaging effect on national security.

5.3.4.4. KXL is a net negative for energy security

As mentioned in subsection iii, many KXL critics were strongly convinced of various enemies, both foreign and domestic (to borrow a phrase), who were intent on using KXL to destabilize both the Bakken and broader energy markets. Many of these same critics, though, also took this line of reasoning a step further, arguing that KXL strongly jeopardized national security. Although participants had various grievances in support of this theme, nearly all arguments touched on a specific key concern: the erosion and abandonment of America’s political and energy sovereignty.

Several critics often tied this to the Bakken, arguing that their region was one of the most important shale plays driving America's energy resurgence. Leland Davis, who as mentioned in section ii was strongly opposed to transporting any oil at all out of North Dakota, argued that by not supporting the growth of more local refineries, were effectively ceding any advantage they had accrued and dooming the oil patch to poverty[26]:

> If anybody in this world deserves the benefits of Bakken oil, it is the residents of North Dakota. Do we not hold all the cards? This is North Dakota oil we are talking about. Shouldn't the residents of North Dakota have a say about what we want done with our oil, or have our elected officials already squandered our rights? What is happening in North Dakota is less than a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity (Davis, 2014).

This was echoed by Heitkamp opponent Tom Potter, who argued that some of shale's biggest Republican supporters were, in essence, killing the shale miracle by supporting KXL:

> I am delighted to note that U.S. oil production has increased for the first time in 30 years. This increase is largely due to the added production from the oil fields in western North Dakota. I cannot understand why North Dakota lawmakers would have the slightest interest in transporting foreign oil across the U.S. from Canada to the Gulf Coast. It seems to me that our first priority ought to be capturing the value of North Dakota crude by increasing the capacity of local refineries to turn our product into gasoline and diesel fuel for our local farmers and motorists (Potter, 2012).

---

[26] While Davis' dream is somewhat coming true with the September 2017 permitting of the Davis Refinery (no apparent relation) in his hometown of Belcourt, it should be noted that most KXL opponents, and even many of its supporters, oppose refineries in North Dakota, albeit for different reasons (environment v. economic, respectively). Many oil industry supporters and critics point to the myriad struggles of Dickinson's diesel-only Dakota Prairie Refinery since its opening in 2015 right at the start of the oil price slump (see Scheyder (2016) for a good summary). Skepticism has been expressed as to whether the Davis Refinery will suffer the same fate (Monke, 2016). In several interviews with industry-affiliated individuals, I was told that regardless of the price of oil, building refineries in North Dakota makes little economic sense given that demand is greater in higher population areas and that existing refining hubs in the Midwest and Gulf Coast are able to refine cheaply due to infrastructural advantages and economies of scale.

Other critics in this vein were specifically concerned about KXL's job displacement on both Bakken crude production and North Dakota's economy as a whole. J. Richardson (2011) took issue with a column by fellow CCW Evan Wilcox (2011), which stated that a significant portion of KXL's 20,000 potential jobs (a figure from Fox News, with TransCanada predicting only 13,000) would be in North Dakota. Arguing that such a figure would be impossible given that the pipeline will never enter the state, Richardson responded, "Let's look beyond Fox for the facts. The Keystone XL pipeline might indeed be the project that keeps adding more jobs. Jobs trucking and piping clean water to where there once was plenty? … Why take the risk to possibly pay Canada when we can grow so much fuel ourselves?" (J. Richardson, 2011). In more hyperbolic tone, another CCW (who seemed more accepting of grander claims about KXL's potential Bakken impact) stated that Western North Dakota's economy and tax base would collapse due to massive jobs displacement in the trucking and railroad industries. The author went on to state his case rather succinctly: "Pipelines cost jobs … North Dakota's red hot economy is based on jobs being available, take them away and the decline will begin" (Bishop, 2014).

Critics arguing for Bakken exceptionalism, though, were only a portion of those objecting to eroding sovereignty, with the latter group of writers taking a far more critical view of the oil industry and its enablers. Several of these critics were concerned with what effects allowing foreign governments to participate in the US energy sector would have on national security. Greg Stites, who in subsections ii and iii argued that politicians have promoted KXL at the expense of Bakken-exclusive pipelines, advanced the theory that politicians were specifically abandoning the Bakken and, by extension, American energy

independence, in order to score cheap political points with their donors and base: “The Keystone XL pipeline does nothing for U.S. energy independence because the Chinese and Canadians own the Keystone XL product. Is it possible our politicians have promoted TransCanada's pipeline simply to discredit President Obama?” (Stites, 2013). Pat Hedstrup also brought back the reflexive Chinese conspiracy, arguing that the significant stake of Chinese corporations in tar sands projects in Alberta combined with their desire to have the oil for their own domestic uses made KXL too risky for the United States: “Is the Keystone pipeline going to carry oil owned by China across the United States to the Gulf? Who is going to build the pipeline? The U.S.? Canada? China? … Is national security no longer a concern?” (Hedstrup, 2012). The ever-present Dean Hulse (2015) also sought to draw attention to the perils of this Asian connection, asking, “Do Japanese, South Korean, Thai, Indonesian, Chinese and Norwegian corporations really want to ensure energy independence for North America? Or, is there something else at play?”

China bashing served a rhetorical purpose by allowing KXL critics to paint themselves as the true guardians of economic security, national sovereignty and the Dakotan (and by extension, American) way. Indeed, many of these same “freedom” arguments were also used by those questioning KXL’s security on environmental grounds. Larry Larsen, one of the key letters writers among the Chinese conspiracy fringe, argued that not only did we have to worry about these foreign enemies and their designs on KXL’s oil, but that the very existence of such a publicly-known concentration of volatile hydrocarbons was in and of itself an existential security risk:

> Every day, the thick semifluid tar-sand oil will be thinned, allowing it to better flow through the pipeline, by adding 100,000 barrels of highly explosive

> methane saturated Bakken crude at a Baker, Mont., terminal; which, in truth, will turn the pipeline into a Timothy McVeigh-type person's dream (Larsen, 2014).

Such an invective thus has the effect of moving from the threat of foreign oil funding terrorism to directly causing terrorism, a theme which was also seized on by other writers who wrote about KXL as if it were a literal invasion force lying in wait to decimate the Heartland at a time of no one's choosing or convenience. LaDuke (2014), who related KXL to the legend of the Black Snake, employed another serpentine metaphor to address the pipeline's three-headed challenge to sustainability:

> The hydra of pipeline proposals across North America should give us pause … That decision is destabilizing North American infrastructure. Spending money on what will be "stranded assets" of pipelines will destabilize our economy, as oil spills, climate change and a lost opportunity to become energy efficient and self-sufficient with renewables and post petroleum choices throw us into a downward economic spiral.

Jennifer Moen (2012), too, seized on this theme of carbon lock-in, arguing that KXL was being used as a "devious dagger" by congressional Republicans to hold up critical infrastructure spending while simultaneously precluding the future possibility of renewable energy development. Indeed, for many of the above critics, KXL felt like multiple metaphorical stabs in the back, as it simultaneously opened up the beloved prairie to economic, environmental and, in a worst case scenario, terrorist, upheaval, but also foreclosed emerging forms of productive rural livelihoods based on a transition away from fossil fuel.

KXL, therefore, represents a major affront to the values of security-minded KXL writers as it is viewed as violating many of the stable arrangements (property rights,

freedom from outside influence, effective political representation) that these writers feel make North Dakota an exceptional place to live. Many writers specifically expressed feelings of loss and hopelessness, arguing that the benefits of the Bakken ("our oil") were being taken away from them and wasted on a project that will, as Moen (2012) states, "not bring us closer to energy self-sufficiency, but further line the already bulging pockets of Big Oil." Thus, while some of the arguments regarding internationalist, power elite conspiracies and the threat of massive economic collapse (many of which were also employed by pro-KXL writers to advance a diametrically opposed vision) may have been overblown, they are a reflection of the intense feelings of frustration that many of these Cassandras felt in trying to persuade an increasingly complacent set of North Dakota policy makers, not to mention their fellow residents.

5.4 Conclusion

Analysis of letters to the editor and editorials published in North Dakota newspapers between August 1, 2011 and July 31, 2016 revealed the Measure 5 and the Keystone XL pipeline debates to be two of the main vehicles through which writers interrogated and contested deeper questions about Dakotan identity, the role of the fossil fuel industry and the proper present and future direction of North Dakota's economy and society. Views on M5 were divided between measure supporters who emphasized environmental preservation as integral to preserving North Dakota's unique identity and lifestyle and measure opponents who argued that mandated attempts at conservation would endanger this very same lifestyle (See Table 17 (p. 220) for a full description of themes and discourses). Views on KXL were similarly split. Supporters argued that the

Position	Theme	Discursive purpose
M5 Support	- Preserving the environment (n=74)	- Taxation for mitigation
	- Supporting farming through oil (n=26)	- Expanded, sustainable agriculture
	- Upholding Theodore Roosevelt's legacy (n=11)	- Oil can support conservation/recreation
	- Cautious opposition (general strategy)	- Proper regulation without radicalism
M5 Opposition	- Out-of-state takeover (n=51)	- Outsiders seek to take oil wealth
	- Underfunding Bakken communities (n=44)	- Environment over wellbeing
	- Attack on property rights and farming (n=37)	- Property rights as bedrock of values
	- End run around legislature (n=28)	- Legislature reflects popular will

Table 17: Themes and Discourses in Measure 5 Editorials

pipeline was crucial not only to the success of the Bakken, but was also a bellwether for the fate of the entire North American petroleum industry. Opponents, though, viewed KXL in quite different terms, arguing that the pipeline presented significant environmental risk and was a way to lock in fossil fuels and strangle the US' nascent renewables industry (see Table 18 (p.223) for a full description). Debates over these issues thus expanded far beyond their original subjects into broader referenda about support or opposition to the petroleum industry in North Dakota and the status quo politics that underlies the industry's continued dominance of the state's economy and political scene.

These findings broadly conform to arguments from critical discourse analysis advanced in Chapter 3 (Research Design) that assert that newspapers serve as key spaces for struggles over ideology and values. In the case of the M5 and KXL debates, these struggles centered on notions of the proper behavior of Dakota residents vis a vis established norms and institutions, many of which were seen as under threat due to social upheaval resulting from the fracking boom and bust. These anxieties were particularly evident in arguments about the role of non-Dakotan outsiders in state and local decision making processes, as well as the threats boom/bust related changes pose to bedrock Dakota ideals such as private property rights and community cohesion and consensus (see Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of the code of behavior known as "The North Dakota Way"). Thus, following arguments advanced in a previous article asserting that interest group-dominated events provide physical safe spaces for contentious debate among elites (T. Loder, 2016a), it can be argued that the editorial sections of North Dakota newspapers serve as metaphorical safe spaces for similar contestation among a broader

cross-section of the population (i.e. CCWs and professional writers both contribute to editorials).

Position	Theme	Discursive purpose
KXL Support	-Pipelines better than rails (n=19)	- Other transport methods unsafe, should not be inevitable
	- Net positive for energy security (n=18)	- KXL locks in existing Bakken economy
	- Bipartisanship (n=14)	- No rational reason for political opposition
	- Low environmental risk (n=13)	- Environmental objections to KXL are invalid
	- KXL opposition is anti-Canadian (n=8)	- Rejecting KXL hurts our closest ally
KXL Opposition	-High environmental risk (n=20)	- KXL is a distinct threat to lifestyles
	- Corrupt politicians backing KXL (n=20)	- KXL is not otherwise worthwhile
	- KXL leads to oil export/higher gas prices (n=28)	- KXL does not support the public good
	- Net negative for energy security (n=15)	- KXL prevents renewables development

Table 18: Themes and Discourses in Keystone XL Editorials

6. MINOT RESIDENTS' VIEWS ON THE OIL BOOM

6.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a corrective to the literature on activism inspired by oil booms through analysis of views of purposively sampled Minot residents who have no direct or indirect harm or benefit from oil operations in the in Bakken (i.e. environmental disturbances to property, mineral estate disputes with neighbors or oil companies, encroachment on tribal sovereignty, etc.). The chapter argues that this group of residents views oil as a secondary concern to the cultural and quality of life changes in boomtown Minot, with oil a means to express grievances on this topic. While Chapter Four showed how North Dakotan identity is compatible with the Bakken oil boom and Chapter Five showed how Bakken oil infused policy-relevant views published in newspaper texts, this chapter changes geographical scale to Minot and focuses on a different set of respondents, defined here as longer-term residents who have lived in Minot for more than five years. This chapter first situates Bakken oil boom Minot within the city's more than 100 year history of booms and busts that have occurred as a result of Minot's entanglement in various extractive and industrial processes. Situating the current boom and bust cycles within these past cycles is important not only for drawing economic and political parallels, but also for demonstrating how discourses used by respondents to interpret the externalities of the oil boom often mirror those used by previous city residents to interpret the externalities of these previous periods of cultural change.

Residents were unwilling to directly criticize the oil and gas industry for many of the city's negative externalities, but this chapter identifies four specific discourses that

underlie most of the grievances that respondents expressed: 1.) The privilege that the oil boom brings for longer-term Minot residents; 2.) Who or what is to blame for negative aspects of the boom; 3.) the role of oil in financing an improved post-oil future; and 4.) the specific political culture of Minot and North Dakota that discourages criticism that might upset community cohesion. Following the explication of these inward discourses, chapter analysis focuses on specific themes (or outward discourses) that emerged through the coding of interview transcripts. These three themes are: 1.) the effects the oil boom has had on housing cost and availability, especially in relation to recovery from the 2011 Souris River Flood; 2.) the decline of moral values and increase in crime during the boom; and 3.) Minot's economic and cultural future following the end of oil as a viable economic engine. This chapter concludes that residents view oil- and gas-related problems as an outgrowth of longstanding political economic issues and cultural changes, rather than as a direct result of the oil boom or as the specific fault of the oil and gas industry. The absence of this specific political dimension of fracking booms and the trend against contentious political debates present in Minot helps explain the lack of anti-fracking activism in the Bakken when compared to activist movements that have arisen in similar situations in other American shale plays.

6.2 Population and economic growth in Minot

Although the majority of the North Dakota Bakken - especially sites of extraction - remains rural, cities in the region have seen tremendous growth between the 2010 census and 2015 population estimates, in terms of both population and the built environment. This growth has been particularly acute in the core production cities in the Montana border

counties (the MonDak region), with the populations of the larger cities of Williston and Dickinson growing by 83% and 33% respectively (with both now surpassing 20,000 residents) and the smaller city of Watford City ballooning nearly four-fold from 1,700 residents to 6,700.[27] However, this growth has also affected the region's cultural and commercial hub of Minot, a city on the less productive eastern edge of the Bakken (see Figure 5 (p.227) for a detailed map of the city). Minot's role as a base for white collar industry-related employment and oil-by-rail transport (elaborated further in section 6.3) has allowed it to grow by more than 20% since 2010 to nearly 50,000, the threshold needed to qualify as an official "urban area" under US Census Bureau rules (US Census Bureau, 2017).

While this rapid urbanization placed strains on the Bakken's housing, infrastructure and social services sectors, it has also allowed for the revitalization of formerly declining agricultural communities through their integration with globalized socio-technological regimes in agro-resources, transportation, finance and telecommunications. Minot serves as a prime example of this type of urbanization, as it has morphed from a static, geographically- and socially-isolated city dependent on declining military investment and constantly fluctuating grain markets in the mid-2000s into a dynamic, rapidly-growing city with widespread fiber-optic internet, the state's largest airport, a booming real-estate market, hundreds of new retail locations and restaurants and more than 50 oil and

[27] It is important to note that these estimates only include those in permanent housing (owned or rented homes, apartments or mobile homes with a fixed address). Hodor and Bangsund (2013) have estimated that the inclusion temporary direct and indirect petroleum industry workers, many of whom live in crew camps or illegally squat in areas such as parking lots and vacant lots, would push Williston's population over 50,000.

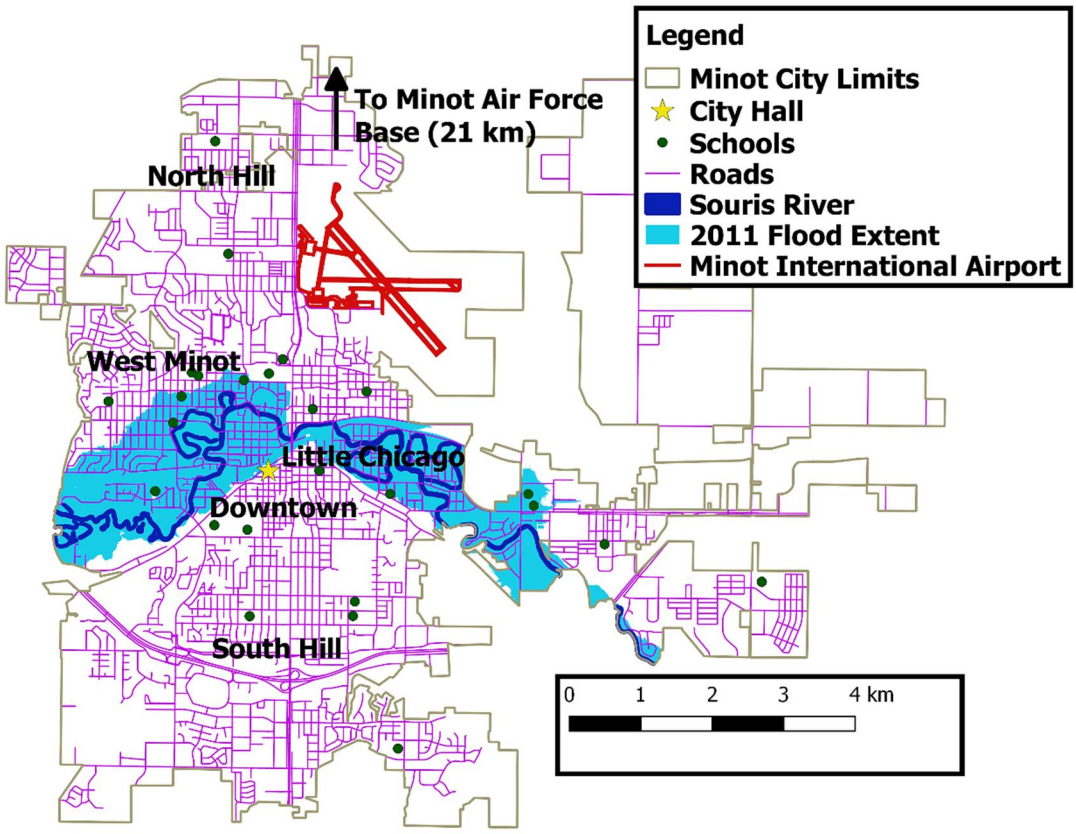

Figure 5: Key features of Minot, North Dakota. Map adapted from City of Minot, 2018

gas-related companies by January 2016 (Minot Area Chamber of Commerce, 2017). Indeed, respondents specifically argued that Minot did not experience as many growing pains as Williston and Dickinson (which were often invoked as cautionary tales of the downsides expansion), precisely because its government and business community aggressively leveraged the city's existing advantages (banking, interstate highway and rail networks, greater experience with white collar jobs than MonDak) to make itself attractive to outside investors.

Yet, for Minot, the Bakken boom has not been a seamless transition from prairie hinterland to neoliberal Petropolis (Bhatia and Casper, 2013). Its growing pains have been more than a mild discomfort to some of its more incredulous residents. Respondents spoke of positive economic and technological benefits of the boom being outweighed by negative social and cultural developments such as increased crime, moral and cultural decline resulting from differing values of newcomers and a general sense of the city losing its identity by catering to the needs of the oil industry over those of its long-term residents. Similarly skeptical responses were also provided by Williston residents to Kyle Conway, as recounted in his recent essay "Notes from the Global Hinterland: What it Feels like to be Global in North Dakota":

> The Bakken is embedded in a number of overlapped, criss-crossing global economic networks involving oil, technology, and the materials necessary to support the boom. Many residents feel as a result that large corporations without roots in the region now have an outsized influence over their lives. Money gives people living at a distance power over western North Dakota. But what is the nature of that power? (Conway, 2016, p. 37).

Additionally, Minot has suffered through several crises since the start of the oil boom in 2007, including the 2011 Souris River flood and a prolonged economic bust since 2015 due to declining oil prices, which have served to interfere with Minot's re-incarnation as the industrial "Magic City" of the late 1800s. Indeed, Minot and North Dakota as a whole have been subjected to many periods of boom and bust throughout their history, leading to a discontinuous development trajectory. This chapter's next section will critically examine Minot's history in order to demonstrate how booms and busts, and the related social and economic changes they have brought, have greatly affected the city's political, social and economic landscapes.

6.3 Minot: city of booms and busts

Appreciation of Minot's booms and busts is critical to understanding the ways in which residents view Minot's relationship with the Bakken oil boom and bust. Minot is frequently stereotyped, both by long-term residents and casual outside critics, as a city that has changed little since the mid-20th century. Although Minot saw modest, yet stable, economic and population growth between 1960 and 2000 (increasing from ~30,000 residents in 1960 to ~37,000 in 2000), from its founding in 1887 until the late-1950s, Minot experienced a series of economic booms and busts that defined the prevailing economic landscape and the political and cultural milieu that has persisted to the present day. Of particular salience to this chapter's case study is Minot's repeated encounters with boom-and-bust related newcomers and the often hostile reception these individuals receive from the city's permanent population, who view newcomers more as symptomatic of crime and moral decay than as evidence of economic growth.

In summation, the booms and busts from the 1870s to the 1950s have shaped the cultural, economic and political atmosphere in which the current Bakken boom and bust has taken place. Many of the same boom and bust trends (massive in-migration, inadequate infrastructure, crime and disorder) that have been the hallmarks of each cycle Minot has undergone have become major topics of debate among Minot residents during the present cycle. As will be discussed in greater detail in section 6.4, the moral panic associated with rapid change continues to condition narratives about the role outsiders play in Minot's social fabric during the current fracking boom and bust. Provided below is a brief overview of Minot's booms and busts, with an emphasis on the moral elements of the city's response to these periods of upheaval.

Major settlement in North Dakota began after the creation of the Dakota Territory in 1861, the passage of the Homestead Act in 1862 and the early stages of the building of the first cross-prairie railroad, the Northern Pacific Railway (currently operating as BNSF), in the early 1870s.[28] However, this settlement boom was itself tempered by a corresponding bust, the Panic of 1873, which led to the bankruptcy of the railroad's chief financier, Jay Cooke, resulting in multiple changes in the railroad's ownership and a decade-long construction odyssey marked by frequent work stoppages. Yet much as North Dakota's boom-and-bust economy prospered during the recent Great Recession, so too did the state's economy prosper during the post-Panic downturn which lasted until 1879. Indeed, "The Great Dakota Boom" began in 1878 as speculators connected to

[28] It should be noted that these advances were aided by the displacement of Native Americans due to the aggressive escalation of the Indian Wars in the Northern Plains by the US government, especially after the Sioux uprising of 1862.

Northern Pacific developed bonanza farms (considered to be more than 5,000 acres) in Eastern North Dakota to supply wheat to the burgeoning milling industry in Minneapolis. These farms attracted many laborers to North Dakota. In addition, many homesteaders and land speculators began to flock to the state in the 1880s to capitalize on these newly favorable economic conditions. However, many of the rapidly growing settlements attracted temporary residents hoping to make quick fortunes and then return to their home states. These residents, then as now, were often blamed for the crime and disorder that plagued these frontier towns, offering historical parallels to reports of increased crime due to new oil drilling in the Bakken (Robinson, 1966).

Although the Boom peaked in 1883 (eventually ending in 1886), population growth remained strong throughout the 1880s because of further railroad expansion and a generally favorable economy. Much of this growth was directly and indirectly spurred by the actions of industrialist James J. Hill, who financed the expansion of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad in 1879-1880 and the construction of a second and more northern cross-prairie railway, the Great Northern Railway (today also owned by BNSF), which was built between 1883 and 1886. Emerging directly as a result of the Great Northern's construction was Minot. The harsh winter of 1886 (the same winter that ultimately caused Theodore Roosevelt to abandon cattle ranching in the state) and difficulties constructing a bridge over the nearby Gassman Coulee, Hill's corporation decided to overwinter in the site that is now Minot. The camp, which grew to over 8,000 men and 6,000 horses in a matter of weeks, was said to have sprung up "as if by magic" leading to the nickname Magic City. After Hill and his associate Henry Minot (the town's

namesake) negotiated a large land purchase from wealthy local homesteader Erik Ramstad, Minot was incorporated on July 16, 1887 (Robinson, 1966).

Yet shortly after Minot arose at the tail-end of the Boom, it, like the rest of North Dakota, was hit hard by the late-1880s bust. The crash of the over-inflated land market as well as a dramatic price decline for wheat due to oversupply and the monopolistic market control of the Minneapolis railroad and milling cartels caused many to leave North Dakota by the late 1880s. Thus, much as has been the case with the recent downturn in oil prices, North Dakota's 1880s rush to develop in order to take advantage of favorable commodity markets led to the state falling victim to what Robinson (1966) refers to as the oft-repeated, "Too-Much Mistake": "In the speculative frenzy the pioneers had done too well. Led on by expectations that were not to be realized, they had equipped their new society with more towns, stores, newspapers, churches, and banks than it could support … Retrenchment and abandonment soon followed" (p. 155). Thus, the first major boom and bust cycle for both Minot, and North Dakota as a whole, was complete.

Despite a recovery of wheat prices by the late-1880s, the population decline and closure of businesses had been so severe that the economy made no real recovery, leading to the Depression Nineties. However, concerted efforts on the part of railroad impresarios continued to attract settlers to the state, with its promise of some of the last "free" land in the United States. Indeed, despite an overall negative trend in the national economy following the Panic of 1893 and strong public and government backlash after the discovery of a rail-freight price-fixing scheme in 1896, the population of the state grew from just under 200,000 in 1890 to over 300,000 by 1900 and the total value of the state's

2,500 miles of track was assessed at nearly $13 million (the equivalent of $300 million as of October 2017).

All of this recession-era growth, as well as a dramatic grain freight price reduction following the 1896 scandal, served as the preconditions for growth in the 1900-1915 period known as the Second Boom. Western North Dakota as a whole did particularly well during this period as settlers, speculators and robber barons turned their attention away from the Eastern bonanza lands and towards the semi-arid regions west of the Missouri River. Minot in particular saw its role cemented as northwestern North Dakota's pre-eminent rail hub through the building of a main terminal for the Great Northern and the upstart Soo Line Railroad's "Wheat Line" that crossed the northern half of the state. The city also saw its fortunes rise politically during this period because it became the headquarters of the state's burgeoning Socialist Party of North Dakota, which was eventually folded into the Non-Partisan League (NPL) that would dominate North Dakota politics from the mid-1910s to the early 1920s. The Party's intellectual leader and chief apologist, Arthur Le Sueur, was elected as the city's mayor in 1912 and promptly worked to dispel Minot's crime-ridden, frontier town reputation by beginning a campaign of urban renewal and public works projects, which mirrored much of the eventual platform of Sewer Socialism (or "Le Sewer" Socialism) adopted by the Socialists in Midwestern cities during the 1930s – 1960s (Le Sueur, 1955, J.A. Loder, 1985). Le Sueur and the Party, including future NPL founder Arthur Townley, also worked strongly to organize socialist-leaning German and Norwegian immigrant farmers into agricultural cooperatives to combat the strength of the railroad and milling cartels. The fortunes of both Le Sueur and the Socialist Party would decline significantly after the Party's ill-fated alliance with the Industrial

Workers of the World (reviled by farmers) and its alienation of much of its ultranationalist, ethnic German base through ill-timed anti-military and anti-Catholic screeds after the outbreak of WWI in 1914. However, the core concepts of “Minot Socialism” were used by Townley to draw many rural Socialists into the NPL in 1915, thus allowing the NPL faction of the state’s Republican Party to win control of the state legislature and all statewide offices in the 1916 election (Putnam, 1956; Pratt, 1988).

The Second Boom was short-lived for both Minot and North Dakota. Despite high crop prices from 1914-1917, North Dakota was unable to take advantage of this good environment because of poor wheat harvests that averaged nearly 50% below average. Even though harvests began to recover by 1917, the US government fixed the price of wheat nearly one third below its market value upon their entry into WWI, yet did not do so for flour, allowing even more profit to flow to the Minneapolis milling complex and stoking much anger among rural Dakota farmers. Western North Dakota was particularly disadvantaged in the late-1910s due to both extreme drought and rampant inflation of land prices due to intensified competition following the claiming of all “free” land. These twin pressures caused many farmers to go bankrupt and led to a rash of foreclosures in the early 1920s, forcing many families into the cities. Indeed, despite suffering mightily from rural deflation and the near collapse of the agricultural credit sector (which caused many bank failures), Minot’s population exploded by more than 50 % (growing from just over 10,000 to nearly 17,000) from 1920 – 1929, a period during which the state as a whole grew by barely 5% and many rural areas, especially the northwest, lost residents by the thousands, a period which Robinson (1966) refers to as the Rural Exodus (p. 378).

Despite this population growth, the 1920s was mixed for Minot. After finally ousting the increasingly unpopular and scandal-plagued NPL from power in 1922, the new conservative Republican government sought to simultaneously provide relief for struggling farmers and gain autonomy over the grain markets by constructing the state-owned North Dakota Mill and Elevator.[29] This oft-mythologized "breaking the strangling by Minneapolis" (see section 4.3) helped boost Minot tremendously, as it became the leading grain shipping terminal for the western half of the state. This dominant shipping position grew so attractive to outside investors that a Minneapolis-based consortium constructed two flour mills, allowing Minot to become the state's second-leading producer of flour by 1928 (Dickson, 1985). Minot also benefited tremendously from the automotive revolution, becoming a major trucking thoroughfare because its strategic location at the intersection of 3 multi-state highways, which also helped to further underscore its role as the leading center of commerce for western North Dakota.

Yet these same advances that contributed heavily to Minot's prosperity during a time of general deprivation also enabled many of the criminal elements that had long sullied the city's reputation. The increased stature of the railroads and growing highway network made Minot a hub for many vice elements, particularly Prohibition-related liquor smuggling between Canada and Chicago, earning the city, especially the working-class High 3rd district, the nickname "Little Chicago." Although such activities were officially

[29] Although the NPL occasionally won major elections up until the late 1930s, it effectively ceased to exist as a major organization following the rout of 1922. Many of the NPL's most popular policy proposals were co-opted by the non-League faction of the Republican Party, which attracted support from the state's wealthier farmers after 1925. Most of the NPL's isolationist old guard, including Townley, were forced out during the 1930s by younger activists sympathetic to the New Deal and President Roosevelt's internationalism, culminating in a still-extant merger with the state's Democratic Party in 1952.

condemned by city leaders (who often responded with show raids on speakeasies and brothels, as well as largely insignificant Chinese-run “drug dens”, to appeal to public sentiment for a strong crackdown), open corruption and collusion with criminals by city and county law enforcement and similar suspected, yet clandestine, behavior by the city commission (which had neither elected, nor independent, oversight) resulted in the formation of a strong public crusade against vice that dragged on through the late-1930s. This crusade, led by many of the city’s prominent Protestant citizens, successfully agitated to replace the commission system with a mayor-council-manager system in 1932. The new reform-minded city council chose as city manager a non-Minot native and career civil engineer, Jay Bliss, who quickly set about slashing city expenses, aggressively curbing vice activities and ending the city’s patronage system. Perhaps not surprisingly, this made Bliss, widely viewed as someone with an eastern North Dakota, rather than western North Dakota, mentality, many enemies among the city’s political old guard. Chief among these opponents was mayor Jack Patterson, who sought to undermine Bliss and the reformists at every turn until Bliss agreed to return Minot to its previous “open town” (gambling-friendly) status, which he refused (Dickson, 1985).

During the 1930s, though, Minot faced much more dire problems than vice and political intrigue. The US as a whole was reeling from the effects of the Depression and North Dakota was no exception. As was the case in many Plains states, North Dakota farmers went bankrupt in droves due to poor growing conditions and inability to pay debts, with many choosing to either migrate to local cities in hopes of New Deal-related employment or to abandon the state entirely and migrate west to states such as California, Oregon and Washington. Minot, in particular, received ~500 rural arrivals (an increase of

3% to a population of approximately 16,000), which furthered added to the ranks of the unemployed already filling the city (Gillette, 1940). All was not lost, however, as Minot and North Dakota as a whole were undergoing an uncharacteristically progressive phase in the post-NPL era. Former state Attorney General William Langer, an erstwhile League ally and chief ideologue of the League's right-wing (anti-socialist) bloc, was elected governor in 1932. Known as "Wild Bill" due to his colorful personality, checkered ethics record and idiosyncratic political behavior, Langer represented the newer breed of NPL politicians and explicitly sought to use both the powers of the state-owned Bank of North Dakota and the expanding federal relief portfolio to bring much needed relief to North Dakota. While much of the relief secured under the Langer regime came in the form of the Interior Department's purchase of more than 1,000,000 acres of farmland in the Badlands region (much of which was leased back to its former owners at pennies on the dollar to encourage them to remain on the land (Cunfer, 2001)) and a statutory ban on farm foreclosures, North Dakota's cities also received significant federal relief money. Minot city manager Bliss was extraordinarily aggressive in his partnership with Langer, securing more than $1,000,000 from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) for community beautification and improvement efforts. Bliss' "pride projects" employed hundreds of jobless men and helped to build badly-needed infrastructure for Minot including dozens of parks, a new downtown bridge, 50 blocks worth of street paving and a sewage treatment plant which the city's public health officer called the "greatest sanitation improvement which the city of Minot could have made" (Dickson, 1985).

Thus, while Minot certainly struggled during the Depression, it fared far better than other parts of the nation and certainly better than North Dakota did overall, which

Robinson argues, “plainly faced much greater hardship … than the nation as a whole” (p. 400). Indeed, Minot was one of the few areas in North Dakota that did not lose population during the 1930s (growing at a then abnormally sluggish 3%) while the state as a whole lost nearly 40,000 residents (almost 6% of the population), the beginning of a bumpy, eight-decade period in which North Dakota ultimately lost ~8,000 permanent residents, a trend bucked only during the present decade largely on the back of the Bakken boom.[30] Yet despite entering the post-Depression era in relatively good economic shape, Minot, too, would eventually feel the pinch of population loss and rural decline.

The 1940s and 1950s began a period of relative stability for Minot, punctuated by several major events that would define the city’s future path. WWII was a boon for North Dakota, as the state’s farmers were finally able to take advantage of high wartime commodity prices.[31] Tremendous military enlistment also largely ended unemployment, with many rural areas being so affected by loss of young men that city folk began working the fields to harvest record crops. However, during this same period North Dakota failed to attract significant war industry investment or significant industrial development of any kind, becoming more dependent on agriculture than at any time in its history. Simultaneously, farms began consolidating and mechanizing at record rates, creating fears of mass rural unemployment after enlisted men returned from the war. To head off this scenario, the state government created the North Dakota Postwar Planning Board,

[30] Although some of Minot’s stability can be attributed to its century-long hub city status, Minot has largely defied North Dakota’s population trends and has never posted a negative population growth decade in its 130-year history.

[31] Despite this overall positive trend, one fifth of all farms were foreclosed on due to the end of the Langer moratorium.

which drew up an aggressive development strategy based on economic development of the Missouri River, highway construction, rural electrification and modernization of the housing and infrastructure of North Dakota's aging cities. Many of these changes came to fruition in the 1950s due to an influx of federal spending, with Minot benefiting heavily from the construction of the Central Power Electric Cooperative in 1949, Minot Air Force Base in 1957 and the nearby Garrison Dam on the Missouri River in 1953, each of which generated over $200,000,000 of economic impact for the state by 1966 (Robinson, 1966). However, despite the major boost that these projects provided to North Dakota's economy, North Dakota still failed to attract major industries and permanent investment to the state. Indeed, it was during this period that young, college-educated residents began leaving North Dakota for opportunities in cities such as Minneapolis, Denver and locations further afield.[32] Thus, it became clear that long-term development would require attracting outside investment and the creation of a fully-fledged industrial sector, as well as finding ways to compete with other regions of the country with fewer logistical and geographical disadvantages to overcome.

Enter the first oil boom. Although wildcatters had been drilling in the Williston Basin (the parent formation of the Bakken) since 1916, it was not until 1951 that the first wells began producing in Tioga.[33] From that point on, oil became a big business, with over 100,000,000 barrels of oil produced within the first decade, placing North Dakota in the

[32] This "brain drain" is still, as of 2018, a major area of concern for both policymakers and local Minot residents.

top 10 oil producing oil states for the first time. This first boom shares many similarities to the present boom. The frenzy over the possibility of earning quick riches in the hinterland drew many outsiders to western North Dakota, many of whom began squatting in makeshift living quarters due to a lack of available housing. Though oil production in Minot was modest, the city quickly began attracting investment and became a logistical support center due to strong production in bordering counties. Yet this oil boom, too, was not to last. As has been the case during the current Bakken boom and bust, North Dakota's isolation, lack of transportation networks and low refining capacity made getting oil to market difficult. Then as now, massive over-production of oil and gas in both North Dakota and other parts of the world led to a steep drop in prices that made the expensive Bakken oil a less attractive option compared to more conventional plays, with the boom largely over by 1959 (Robinson, 1966; Bluemle, 2000). Although a short-lived second boom occurred in the early 1980s (to be discussed in greater detail in section 6.4), development in the Bakken, much as in the rest of North Dakota, stagnated for the next four decades.

The newfound, though discontinuous, prosperity of the 1950s also re-invigorated many of Minot's vice elements that had remained subdued during the 1940s. During this decade, Minot experienced a relative rash of vice-related crime (mainly prostitution/solicitation, liquor and gambling offences)[34]. To combat this resurgence, community leaders involved with the Minot Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) convened a taskforce to investigate vice activities and enforcement, the result of which

[34] Indeed, during the entire 1950-1959 period there were a total of 265 vice arrests (leading to 171 convictions, nearly all of which were misdemeanors), an average of less than 30 incidents per year.

was a widely-disseminated informational pamphlet with the provocative title of “Why Minot?”, a play on the city’s longtime unofficial motto “Why not Minot?” used to tout the city’s positive qualities (Minot Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1961).[35] This pamphlet, which publicized the names of the city’s various “pimps, prostitutes, pushers, and hoodlums”, contained a series of lurid interviews with local prostitutes, as well as sanctimonious statements from legal and police officials, business leaders and clergy, all of whom sought to cast Minot as a city with an especially serious vice problem atypical of other cities of similar size and demographic composition. The prostitute interviews in particular painted a picture of an intensely moral white Protestant community that had become a den of iniquity through the concerted efforts of career criminals such as “Baby Frank” and “Big Broxie” who sought to trick “hardworking” young white “girls” and naïve “colored women” into lives of debauchery. These criminals, many of whom were from implicitly less moral areas of the country such as the South and notorious urban crime hotbeds such as New York, Chicago and Detroit (as well as the oft –invoked bugbear, Minneapolis), were said to be attracted to Minot due to both the new air force base and its ready market of young men hungry for sex and drugs, as well as the city’s nationwide reputation as a “wide open town” where low-level criminality was openly tolerated, harkening back to Minot’s “Little Chicago” era in the 1920s.

---

[35] In the interests of full disclosure, it should be noted that my grandfather, LeRoy Loder, who was at the time the county district attorney, was one of the prime movers in initiating the taskforce, as well as coordinating the aggressive legal response to the vice community following the pamphlet’s publication. Many of the Jaycees involved with the taskforce are still living and are among the respondents for this project.

Also mirroring the Bliss reform struggles was the report's conclusion that the vice problem was allowed to fester due to the city government's unwillingness to take law enforcement issues seriously (possibly because they were protecting themselves or their boosters due to alleged involvement in solicitation) and lack of a concerted effort to promote Minot as a wholesome, law and order-based community. These accusations of a laissez faire attitude toward crime led to an aggressive crackdown under the collective name Community Committee to Eliminate Vice, popularly referred as the "cleaning up of 3rd Street", due to many of the "houses of ill repute" being located in this infamous section of Minot.

Many of the above-mentioned boom and bust discourses continue to be used by Minot residents in order to explain the disruption they have experienced during the present Bakken Boom. However, despite involving some similar boomtown trends (population growth and demographic changes, infrastructure and crime woes, etc.), much of what is occurring now in the Bakken is fundamentally different than booms of 50 or 100 years ago in terms of the scale and pace of change and in terms of the composition and social structure of Minot's "longer term community." Thus, Chapter 6.4, which reviews in detail the major ways topics of concern among longer-term Minot residents, will argue that Minot's historical geography of booms and busts continues to condition how Minot's permanent community conceptualize their identity and in how this community interprets and understands the rapid, often uncomfortable, changes the city has undergone due to the fracking boom. This section will begin by reviewing the key discursive themes that emerged during qualitative analysis, specifically those that seek to mythologize Minot as a moral, business friendly community free of the sort of political strife that residents

identify as plaguing other communities with weaker moral values. Such preference for traditional standards of behavior and a deference toward strong business and private property rights, helps explain why residents view Bakken oil as a secondary concern and as a means to express grievances, rather than becoming the objective of political contention in and of itself.

6.4 Minot under the Bakken boom and bust

Despite its storied history of booms and busts, Minot's population and economy remained stable, and possibly stagnant, during the 1960-2007 period. This period, though marked by the hallmarks of North Dakota's overall slow decline (farm consolidation and foreclosure, lack of major investment and job creation, brain drain, out-migration and population loss, etc.), is often remembered fondly by many long-term resident respondents due to the city's supposedly strong, unchanging identity as a community based on clear, conservative moral values, respect for authority, property and the rule of law and a high level of unselfish mutual support between neighbors and strangers alike. While historical evidence may contradict this myth of polished cohesion, the ups and downs of the fracking era (2007-present) have led to both real and imagined shifts in Minot's culture and economy that have led many respondents to question whether the perceived benefits from the boom have been outweighed by the negative aspects they feel have resulted from the city's reorganization around the oil and gas industry. This section, then, will examine long-term residents' reactions to this shift, paying critical attention to ways in which previous boom and bust discourses are being recycled to construct specific narratives about Minot. The section will be structured around three

specific thematic areas which provoked significant debate among respondents: (1) availability and cost of housing, which was viewed as being exacerbated by both boom-related changes as well as damage caused by the Souris River flood in 2011; (2) the purported rise in crime in the city, which was seen as both directly related to the boom and bust, as well as emblematic of a general decline in Minot residents' moral values; and (3) the longer-term problems faced by the city such as job availability and quality, lack of amenities and general economic and social opportunity and poor management on the part of the city regarding infrastructure and social service provision.

However, while each of these three thematic areas may be how residents outwardly express their disapproval of boom-related changes, this chapter argues that Minot's culture toward consensus and against behavior that would upset the prevailing economic and social order (which provides older, longer-term residents with certain privilege over community youth or newcomers) causes residents to focus on specific grievances they have against boom-related externalities, rather than to criticize the oil and gas industry and its role in creating the conditions for social problems to fester. Additionally, despite the negative externalities that oil and gas industry might be the catalyst for, many residents in this sample are aware of the significant number of benefits that oil and gas provides both for them and their community in terms of economic growth, opportunities for professional advancement and the possibilities of creating a future Minot that will not succumb to many of the misfortunes that rural areas outside of the Bakken have suffered from. Therefore, before our major analysis, this subsection will identify four key discursive themes that structure how residents express disapproval without directly blaming the oil and gas industry: 1.) The privilege that comes from being a Minot resident,

as well as the specific privileges that oil and gas has provided for permanent Minot residents; 2.) Where blame should be placed for political, economic and social ills residents view as caused by the boom; 3.) What Minot's post-oil future will be, especially in terms of the bifurcation of expectations between Minot's permanent adult and youth populations; and 4.) The specific political culture of Minot which upholds Minot as a morally pure, patriotic and capitalist city struggling against the pernicious influence of outsiders who would seek to destroy this culture in favor of the liberal, morally bankrupt cultures that residents argue exist outside of North Dakota. As oil and gas is framed by many North Dakotans as an integral part of a patriotic, capitalist identity (See Chapters 4 and 5), oil and gas is often not viewed as being part of these suspicious outside influences, despite the majority of money and equipment necessary for extraction coming from outside of the state.

Residents in the sample were largely politically conservative, with many being business owners or directly connected with local Republican politics. As a result, these respondents were very supportive of free-market and pro-growth economics. Thus, residents felt that despite some negatives resulting from the oil boom, they were privileged to live in Minot because of the positive changes they feel the boom had brought in terms of jobs and retail opportunities. Additionally, several of the older respondents felt that Minot had suffered far worse in the past (such as during the Depression) and that younger residents who sought to complain about the boom were misguided. One respondent, a 94-year-old WWII veteran who grew up on a farm during the Depression, also felt that Minoters would not have the luxury to debate the positives and negatives of the boom were it not for the very prosperity that the boom provided for them. He also

argued that it was not oil that was causing Minot's current problems, but the outsiders and youth not willing to work hard and/or avoid anti-social behaviors. Therefore, longer-term, mostly older, residents felt that they were doubly privileged by the boom in that they were able to reap the positive changes the boom had brought over a several year timescale, as well as by possessing the positive reputational and social ties that being an established community member carried during a time of massive in-migration by suspect individuals.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, residents sought to blame specific groups of people, rather than the oil industry, for the negative externalities that occurred during the boom. Respondents were particularly incensed about the behavior of two groups: newcomers and the city government, both of which have been common targets during past boom periods from Minot's history (see 6.3). Newcomers were targeted by residents as their worldviews and personalities were seen as out-of-sync with Minot's law-abiding, family-values-oriented culture. These newcomers were also seen as one of the primary vehicles through which crime (especially vice crime) was introduced into Minot, and through which susceptible local youth were corrupted into a criminal lifestyle. City government was similarly targeted, with respondents accusing members of being unprepared for both the oil boom and the aftermath of the 2011 Souris River Flood, the effects of which were both made worse through the city's poor management of housing and infrastructure issues. While the city government was also criticized for catering too heavily to the oil industry and its workers (such as its $100,000,000 expansion of the city airport), most residents were loath to directly criticize the oil industry. Although firm reasons were not always provided for this hesitation, several residents had either been

employed by oil and gas businesses or stated that their employment depended on business from oil-related firms, thus suggesting that residents were unwilling to speak ill of those who provided them with economic opportunity despite potential misgivings.

A third major discourse was Minot's post-oil future (i.e. when oil is no longer the city's main economic driver). Despite respondents often expressing misgivings about both the spillover effects of the boom or the negative environmental and geopolitical consequences of America's continued reliance on fossil fuels, they also believed that the economic benefits and increased social capital that oil has created would be key to allowing Minot to develop into a prominent, wealthy city with a diversified economic base beyond agriculture and the military (both of which residents felt were unstable and in decline). In connection with the above-mentioned discourse of blaming Minot's city government for mismanagement of boom-related development, respondents argued that the city would only be able to break free from its history by using newfound tax revenue to invest in resources such as education, workforce development and business and tourism promotion in the manner that benchmark cities such as Fargo and Minneapolis were already engaged in. Respondents, all but one of whom were over 35, felt that while their futures were relatively secure, such changes were necessary in order to provide better futures for Minot's young population, which would either be doomed to low-wage, service-sector employment in Minot or would leave for jobs and education in larger cities. However, much as with the privilege debate, respondents often stereotyped Minot's youth as unwilling to prioritize education and job-skill acquisition due to their misguided beliefs that they would be able to make easy livings in the high-paying, oil industry (a prospect which many respondents argued was in doubt given the post-2014 bust).

The final major discursive theme, one which underlies all three of the previous themes, is North Dakota's and, Minot's, specific political cultures. Chapter 4 describes in detail the tenets of the "North Dakota Way", a code of conduct that emphasizes strong support for keeping North Dakota a business-friendly state in which residents are willing to put group needs ahead of their own. Although residents almost never invoked the Way by name, they often spoke of the pressures of conformity that come with living in a city such as Minot, including not being able to express their feelings on contentious issues for fear of the social repercussions for doing so and the strong levels of groupthink they see around issues such as crime and fiscally conservative budgeting at the city and county levels. Additionally, Minot has its own specific cultural history as a morality-centered city, having several times in its past stamped out vice activities during boom periods (see 6.3). This moralistic attitude was strongly present among many older respondents, who felt that alcoholism, drug addiction and street crime were the outgrowth of a permissive boomtown culture that was anathema to Minot's values. Respondents, however, sought to argue that oil itself could not be blamed for this cultural change, as they argued that such periods of moral decline had accompanied previous busts and had been defeated by upright citizens willing to take a public stand for decency. Thus, respondents sought to frame Minot's problems not so much as due to political economic conditions, but due to behavioral problems caused by outsiders with suspect values (as mentioned in the privilege and blame themes).

In each of the three subsections below, respondents will frequently make reference to the three outward discourses mentioned above. However, these residents will rarely directly criticize the oil and gas industry, instead blaming various cultural factors as the

reason for negative externalities that have arisen during the boom. This chapter then argues that these externalities provide a vehicle for longer-term residents to express grievances about long-standing issues that were neglected in the pre-boom landscape.

6.4.1 Housing and the flood

Minot's relative stability and slow growth in the nearly five-decade period preceding the boom explains why housing in Minot was not a major topic of debate for either policy makers or ordinary residents. John MacMartin, the longtime director of the Minot Area Chamber of Commerce, recalled that before the boom era, Minot was seen as a very unattractive destination for people to live and work, with homes being undervalued when compared to similar units in other cities (personal interview). Indeed, the Minot-Williston area had flat housing growth in both the single-family house and rental markets from 2000-2008, with construction of new units in both categories averaging between 150-200 per year, compared to an average of 750 housing units and 1,150 rental units constructed per year from 2009-2013, peaking in 2012 with the construction of ~1,400 homes and ~2,100 apartments. (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013). However, massive boom-related growth post-2007 as well as damage to Minot's existing housing stock from the 2011 Souris River flood has made housing, especially its cost, quality and availability, the topic that nearly every respondent had a strong opinion about.

Of particular salience to the Minot housing debate is the impact of the Souris flood. Whereas other Bakken cities such as Williston and Dickinson have also faced a housing crunch due to boom-related in-migration, they have not had to deal with the repercussions of having significant portions of their permanent population temporary or permanently

displaced due to natural disaster right as the boom was nearing its zenith. Case in point, three years of record rainfall from 2009-2011, combined with record snowfall in the winter of 2010 caused the Souris River to overtop its banks on June 22, 2011. This event led to the mandatory evacuation of more than 11,000 Minot residents (between one fourth and one third of the population, depending upon which estimates are used). However, the worst was yet to come. After the river's peak flow held at 11,000 cubic ft. per sec. for the next 3 days (still well above the average of 5,000), the all clear was given and many residents returned home. Yet localized extreme rain upriver in Saskatchewan caused peak flow to increase to over 30,000 ft. per sec., causing a second flood event in which the river reached its highest level since 1881 and portions of Minot along the floodplain were under up to 10 feet of water (North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, 2014). The City of Minot (2016) estimates that over 4,000 homes (27% of the total housing stock) were either destroyed or damaged beyond repair. Additionally, the impacts of the flood were not distributed evenly among all sectors of the population, with the poor and the elderly being hit especially hard due to the fact that much of the city's lower income housing is located at the bottom of the Souris Valley directly on or adjacent to the river. Many of these residents were also burdened by the inability to afford either temporary or permanent alternative housing (the price of which was already greatly inflated due to housing competition) or to rebuild their homes (due to a combination of lack of flood insurance or inadequate claims payments for those that did have coverage), causing many residents to leave Minot altogether (City of Minot, 2016).

Several respondents had firsthand experience with these flood-related phenomena, either through their own families' struggles or through those of friends and

neighbors. E.T., a 38-year-old speech therapist and Minot native who has spent most of her adult life outside of the city, was forced to leave a high-paying job in Bismarck, the state capitol, and return to Minot to help her elderly father whose house had been flooded. As this unit was a condominium (and thus technically a rental unit), her father did not receive any money from his flood insurance policy and E.T. and her father were forced to finance and conduct most of the repairs themselves:

> There was 7 and a half feet of water in the building and after flood the prices of help skyrocketed, so I came back for the Summer and I helped my Dad gut the sheet rock, the carpet, the insulation and then he rebuilt it on his own. He's 70 years old and did it by himself (personal interview).

B.S., an 84-year-old widow, also faced age-and-income-related struggles with her late husband due to the impacts of the flood, despite ultimately not suffering significant flood-related damage to her home:

> The flood was devastating for us. I was not flooded, but the flood shoreline came to within 6 feet in the backyard. No matter how well the drains were plugged, the force was so great that we still got backup. We evacuated the house, which, looking back, probably wasn't necessary. But, the mayor said there would possibly be 7 to 12 more feet. And given that it was already across the street, it was devastating. One thing, my husband had Parkinson's. It was difficult for him and it was a big burden for me. And we still have a basement full of boxes that I haven't been able to get at (personal interview).

A somewhat different story was recounted by J.A., a 68 year-old retired Minot High School music teacher. J.A.'s house, which was not flooded, is located at one of the highest points in Minot on top of South Hill, universally considered to be the most desirable residential area in the city. Yet during the worst of the flooding, J.A., felt compelled to help some of his friends and neighbors who had lost their homes:

> That day the dikes went out, we were sitting here and I told [wife], “Geez! We’ve got to do something. We’re sitting here high and dry and all these people are being flooded.” And so, we started calling around to people that were floodplain and, long story short, we had some people that moved in with us. We had someone upstairs. We had someone downstairs. And it was a long haul [laughs] … But, I just couldn’t imagine being flooded (personal interview).

A common theme that emerged among respondents was sympathy for the flood victims, with some blaming landlords for exacerbating the post-flood housing shortage by raising rents to cater to higher income renters connected to the oil industry. J.S., a 27-year-old insurance agent and son of a prominent evangelical pastor, noted that while the flood did not affect his family to any significant degree, many congregants from his church were badly affected by gouging in the rental markets, which he argued functioned far better for real estate investors and speculators than for the tenants themselves. E.T., who complained of already paying $1,600/month for her previous 1-bedroom apartment in Bismarck, largely concurred with J.S., arguing that had she not had been able to stay at her father’s secondary residence outside city limits upon her return to Minot, she would likely have been unable to afford a Minot rent equivalent to that of Bismarck due to her diminished salary. Likewise, state Rep. Andrew Maragos (R), whose district includes many lower income areas that were badly affected by the flood, argued that because local homebuilders and landlords were so focused on catering to the needs of the oil industry that they effectively forced many poor, elderly residents out of Minot following the flood due to the exorbitant prices they were charging, especially for temporary rentals. Maragos stated that this and other examples of putting profit over community led to Minot failing its most vulnerable:

> We couldn't take care of these people. We couldn't house them. We lost a lot of them. There was no place to stay and what was left, because of the market forces, was so expensive. You know how these market forces are: if there's a much larger demand than there is supply, then it's impossible for fixed-income people to not be adversely affected … Unfortunately, the oil companies had so much money, they got their way with everything. And so, it was always very disappointing that we lost part of our aging population from this section of the state (personal interview).

Despite these open denunciations of landlords as profiteering from the oil and gas industry, other respondents felt that the industry deserved more praise than criticism for the way it behaved in the wake of the flood. C.B., a 59-year-old nurse and life-long Minot resident, argued that despite the downsides of increased housing competition from oil-employed in-migrants hurting locals needing temporary post-flood housing, if it were not for the infusion of money from these very same residents and the oil companies themselves, Minot as a whole would have suffered a sharp downturn, rather than record growth, during the flood recovery period (personal interview). Similarly, L.A., a 96-year-old retired property manager and former Republican state representative, felt that despite oil-related growth and newcomers being responsible for some of Minot's recent ills such as infrastructure burden and rising crime, he could not blame the struggles of the flood's "not financially secure" victims on "petroleum economics." Indeed, L.A. argued that even though the city had suffered due to the post-2015 downturn in oil prices and the resulting layoffs, Minot citizens would not even have the privilege to engage in such a debate were it not for the overwhelming prosperity that was generated almost solely by oil-related economic activity (personal interview). L.A.'s sentiments were supported by K.N., pastor at a local Lutheran Church, who felt that despite the existence of too much "profit taking" by businesses looking to make quick profits off the infusion of oil-industry money into

Minot's economy, the city would not have been able to recover were it not for this extraordinary economic boost that this money provided. K.N. concluded that, "the oil boom saved Minot" (personal interview).

While most respondents fell into these mostly pro- and anti-industry camps regarding fault for the slow flood recovery, a sizable minority felt that the city government bore much of the blame due to poor decision making and reckless spending, both before and after the flood. B.T., an 88-year-old retired sales manager for Minot's coal-based utility and a former Republican state representative and senator, felt that the city government did a poor job in the years before the flood by not investing in proper flood control, as they took for granted the chance that any large flood could happen following the previous 100 year-level flooding of 1969. This lax attitude, he argued, caused the city government to not properly warn floodplain residents of the dangers they faced and the need for adequate flood insurance coverage. Additionally, B.T., a longtime advocate for limited government and one of the most vocal backers of the ultimately successful 2016 referendum to reduce the size of Minot's city council, argued that the city could better help low income flood victims by giving them property tax relief (which would in turn allow them to afford proper flood insurance). This, he felt, would not only encourage residents to remain in their own homes, but would allow the city government to stop applying for "easy" federal grants for low-income housing that most Minot flood victims are too proud to live in (personal interview).

L.H., a 38-year-old freelance event planner and Iraq War veteran, was also concerned with the city's penchant for using and abusing federal money. She argued that although the city was right to continue applying for relief money from HUD despite being

five years post-flood, she felt that the city's lack of previous attention to flood control and the concerted push to develop Minot's downtown would lead to the money being spent on non-essential construction:

> 2011 we got hit with the flood. It's 2016 and there are still a lot of flooded homes. There are still a lot of people complaining. They [the city government] only have a certain amount of time from when that check is issued to go and figure out what the plans are for a better infrastructure. Look, you know that money's going to go towards the jail. It's going to go towards that or that parking garage downtown that nobody asked for. It's just not going to work" (personal interview).

Many of these same concerns were echoed by 85-year-old R.S., Minot's long-time former city manager. R.S. has been publicly and privately advocating for nearly two decades for the construction of the Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) project to divert water to Minot from the Missouri River. He argued that because NAWS is in legal limbo due to Canadian objections and because the city is so focused on business development and growing its population at all costs, it is unlikely that NAWS or any other water management projects, such as flood protection infrastructure, will be built in the near future.[36]

Thus, to summarize, while respondents disagreed with the reasons as to why Minot struggled so mightily to rectify its housing troubles and recover from the flood, there was near universal agreement that the situation was poor and that the response on the part of the city was inadequate. Indeed, while some chose to cast blame on private sector profiteers or the demands of the increasingly politically powerful oil industry, every

[36] The city government has in the past illegally diverted sales tax money collected expressly for the building of NAWS into the economic development-based MAGIC (Minot Area Growth through Investment and Cooperation) Fund. In 2003, the city lost in court and was forced to refund NAWS more than $1,000,000 (Associated Press, 2003).

respondent who commented on the flood expressed some measure of dissatisfaction with the city's myopic focus on supporting oil-related growth at the expense of long-time residents badly in need of help. As we will see in our next section, this shift away from established community protocols of shared morality and mutual support has contributed to a sense of alienation from the perceived successes of boom-based development.

6.4.2 Crime and morality

Chapter 4 discussed the tenets of patriotism, morality and mutual support that collectively make up the North Dakota Way. Although many critics in that chapter have argued that the Way is either a fallacious appeal to a nostalgic past that never existed or a tool to enforce conformity and the pro-business/pro-fracking status quo, many Minot-based respondents expressed support for the ethos that underpins it. Additionally, the majority of respondents felt that the re-organization of the city's economy around the demands of the oil industry, such as the proliferation of industrial contractors and the growth of the service industry, combined with the purportedly negative behavior of some in-migrants, who are linked to the oil industry, had irreparably damaged the culture that made Minot a special community. This section will critically examine the grievances that respondents have had with these cultural changes, as well as the discourses that respondents use to justify their arguments, many of which mirror those used during previous booms to police morality. In these narratives, oil is not viewed as the ultimate cause for cultural change in Minot, but merely as a catalyst for the changes in the social landscape (including demographic changes related to in-migration). Indeed, while many respondents argue that expanded oil industry and support sector employment has

attracted many criminals to the area, most respondents would not argue that the oil boom was the reason for the purported increase in criminality and decrease in personal safety that has occurred since the boom began in the late 2000s.

Crime has become one of the most publicly recognizable negative externalities in Minot of the Bakken boom. Much of this is due to a strong media fixation on criminal activity in the region, especially more lurid stories of human trafficking, drug trafficking, armed robbery and murder, much of which is reported as being connected to gang activity. Indeed, Minot's own major newspaper, the Minot Daily News, features a "Daily Records" section that reports city government business in which crime features as the most emphasized component. The Daily News also frequently runs feature-length crime-related pieces with prurient titles such as December 2017's "Crime Wave" (Schramm, 2017). This feature included pictures of Minot's new jail and an interview with the city police chief, who argued that Minot's "doubled" violent-crime rate was due to the existence of a criminal pipeline between "the Bakken and Bakersfield [California]", thus furthering the outsider-as-dangerous stereotype.

Despite the media's painting of Minot as a city overrun with criminality, the crime statistics support a different narrative. While Minot has seen an overall rise in the total number of crimes committed, the concomitant population growth renders the increase in the crime rate statistically insignificant. The per capita rate for Minot's peak boom years of 2012-2016 (224 crimes per 100,000 residents) is similar to the per capita rate for the pre-boom years of 2002-2006 (223 crimes per 100,000 residents), with the former rate being skewed higher by an abnormally high crime year in 2015 (303 crimes per 100,000 residents). Even though Minot may currently be experiencing a rash of property crime

during the post-2015 slowdown, crime rates in the city have been consistently at or below the national average for the past 15 years (280 crimes per 100,000 people). Indeed, even though the city's murder rate for the years 2010-2016 was nearly double that of the years 2003-2009 (3.9 versus 2 per 100,000 residents), the total number of murders only increased from 6 to 12, with 6 of those happening in 2011 alone (City-Data, 2018). Thus, while headlines about a doubling of the murder rate may make for attractive headlines, Minot's image as a crime-ridden city appears largely over-stated.

Yet despite crime perhaps not being as severe as reported, many respondents still felt that it was one of the major issues facing Minot, even though none had been personally victimized and most did not have any friends and neighbors who had. Many of these respondents argued that their sense of alarm was due precisely to feeling alarmed by the constant reporting of particularly heinous crimes in either the local media or through gossip on social media. J.A., who felt that the constant barrage of conflicting stories made him unsure of which sources could be trusted, succinctly expressed the anxiety of many respondents:

> We read the paper [Daily News]. I read the police reports and there are more people in the police reports than there were 5, 10 years ago. It was a small little paragraph. Now it's a full page. So, you have to believe it's true that those things are happening just by what you read in the paper. I've never seen somebody shot. I've never seen anybody rob a bank. You know? Or break into somebody's home. But, it must be happening. You know? And if it's happening, it's scary (personal interview).

Indeed, J.A.'s framing of the erosion of Minot's identity as a once secure small town where truth and order were taken for granted and peace of mind was assured was also advanced by L.H. and her friend, C.P., a 42-year-old IT professional, who were interviewed jointly:

> L.H.: Well, lately with the way that they've been doing the media, it's reminding me of the Donald Trump campaign [laughs]. Donald Trump's whole thing is he's relying on the fear of Americans. That's what's going on here in Minot. Another drug bust. Oh, yep. Another murder. This! This! This! It's front-page news. Somebody's sentenced to 40 years. Or somebody's on $2 million bond. You know? It's like, "Ok. Why push that?" Shouldn't you be working on the growth? Something positive that's impacting things. Putting more positive spins on this rather than the negative.
> C.P.: I think people are focused on it [crime] because prior to this [the boom] it was buried [laughs]. It really was! It was Mayberry! [the archetypical wholesome, crimeless rural town depicted on the 1960s TV show *The Andy Griffith Show*]. People didn't get shot! Maybe once in a while there'd be domestic abuse or maybe somebody got killed. But that was even pretty rare … Now I'm getting desensitized to it. Somebody mentioned last night that there was a home invasion where a gal got attacked in her home. Prior to this I probably would have really freaked out over that, but now I'm just like, "Eh" (personal interview).

This purported shattering of the image of Minot as a blissfully unworldly, rule-of-law community with clear, traditional notions of right and wrong (where violations of the latter were previously shocking) pervaded the responses of many middle-aged and elderly respondents, especially when related to matters of personal safety and security. B.H., a 45-year-old IT professional and laid off pipeline safety manager, expressed concern that many of the inviolable values of courtesy and respect that he had been raised to practice were seen as either unnecessary or threatening by many in Minot's current environment. He recounted that while recently while he and his son were driving to the grocery store, he had seen another car driving without its headlights on after dark. B.H. said that while normally he would have politely flashed his lights to alert the other driver, he ultimately decided not to do so after his son informed him that flashing was now being interpreted as a gang sign and a show of aggression. Although B.H. questioned the

validity of his son's claims, this potential sea change in previously unquestioned norms deeply troubled him:

> It's kind of strange that the mentality is that we don't help each other out of fear. I'm pretty sure you [interviewer] wouldn't have tried to jack my car, would ya? [laughs] … But yeah, now you think twice about helping somebody out. Whereas ten years ago it would've been a no brainer if somebody was stuck on the side of the road you'd pull over and help 'em out (personal interview).

S.M., 86 and the widow of a former North Dakota Supreme Court justice, also argued that she had seen a dramatic behavioral shift among local residents since she and her late husband had first arrived in Minot in the 1950s. However, S.M. argued that much of the community decline was due not to younger residents being less moral or inherently deviant (in fact stating that much of the negative behavior has always existed, but has been hidden from public view), but due to a general decline in social capital and civic participation that previously defined Minot:

> There may be bad eggs, so to speak, nowadays among the newcomers, but our own culture has had its fair share of bad eggs, too … I think what would really help is if we still had organizations to connect new people to the community, especially women … back when we first came to Minot they had the Welcome Wagon where all of the mothers would get together to teach new mothers in town about schools and things.

S.M. felt that although economic growth related to the boom had helped improve Minot's art scene and led to better quality of reporting at the Minot Daily News many of the good things about the pre-boom lifestyle she had come to love (peace and quiet, little concern for personal property, etc.) had disappeared and that she

now felt the need to be more vigilant in securing her own home due to the fear of violence:

> It wasn't the North Dakota way to lock a door. If someone got stalled out in a blizzard, and we weren't home to let them in, they needed to be able to get in where it's warm. We didn't see any of that as dangerous since it was just the right thing to do. There hasn't been much crime out where we live [outside of the city limits to the southwest of downtown], but now we hear about elderly people being attacked and we can't be too careful. That's why I have my son and daughter stop by to check on us every day … It's clear that we aren't a little town on the prairie anymore and we just have to accept that (personal interview).

Indeed, many older respondents lamented the increased securitization of their everyday lives because of the panic over boom related crime. Y.P., a 60-year-old housekeeper, argued that the uncomplicated lifestyle and the fact that she could take her safety and security for granted was one of the chief reasons she had moved from California to Minot:

> When I first got here, my daughter took me to Walmart and everybody leaves their car running. Now nobody leaves their cars running. And they lock their doors. You read about this crime that they never had. It was unfortunate to me because after growing up in LA, this was the dream place. You could go out a bit and not worry about leaving your door unlocked, or you could leave your car unlocked. That was great. But not anymore. At least I don't think it's the smartest thing to do (personal interview).

J.A., the retired music teacher, felt that while Minot's heavy police presence was justified due the increase in violent crime, it was unfortunate that his own community needed measures he equated with more historically crime-ridden areas:

> But, there's just more and more … CRIME. And people need more cops. And it's a sad thing to say that, because North Dakota has been a pretty safe place to live. There was a day when we'd never think about locking our

> house. Now, we wouldn't leave the house, you know, [laughs], EVER, unlocked … I mean, it's everywhere now. Fargo had their first policeman killed in I don't know how long. Probably 50, maybe even 100 years … It's scary! (personal interview).

Echoing J.A., 87-year-old L.L., who has served as a teacher and administrator with the Minot Public Schools since 1955, noted that because of concerns about crime, Minot's schools are now required to have their doors locked during school hours and have armed policemen on patrol at all times. Though L.L. felt that Minot was much safer than Williston due to having fewer "adult entertainment" venues such as strip clubs, he expressed great concern about how the increase in vice, especially sex trafficking, had sullied Minot's reputation: "We used to be a clean little town." Furthering this theme of moral decline was K.N., the Lutheran pastor. K.N., who had recently installed security cameras at his church to monitor "drug-seeking burglars", felt that this was a great shame, as the church, in proper Christian fashion, had previously been one of the few places that would provide refuge, include a night shelter, to many of the very same people that had now become criminals. However, K.N. argued that the oil boom/bust was not the reason for the increase in criminal behavior, but merely that many more people were "desperate" due to the city's general economic decline from 2015 onward.[37]

Yet despite the bittersweet emotions that Minot's cultural changes aroused, many respondents were quite clear about who they believed was responsible for the city's moral

[37] Although it is unclear whether K.N. or someone else made the decision to suspend the overnight refuge, the documentary film *The Overnighters* (Moss, 2014) provides a cautionary tale for would be activist pastors. This film chronicles a Lutheran pastor in Williston who allowed homeless residents to sleep in the church for free for more than 2 years. This proved extremely unpopular with the local community and led to the pastor eventually resigning and leaving Williston.

decay, settling on a familiar scapegoat: the outsider. E.T., the speech therapist who returned to Minot to help her father following the flood, argued that even though she felt in-migrants had made Minot a better place overall due to reviving the failing economy, many of these migrants did not share her conservative Christian values:

> I'm kind of nervous how the culture's changed. I mean, like, North Dakota's kind of a hard place to meet people 'cause everybody stays in their little families. But with these new people coming in there's … I don't know, it still seems like everything's changed. Like, you don't leave your doors unlocked anymore and … and even though it's nice to have new people, you don't know their values and backgrounds, so you're not quite as friendly … a couple of times I took the train from Montana and it was loud. And they did NOT have good manners [laughs] (personal interview).

Similarly, C.P. argued that seeing so many strangers, many of whom she believes may be potential criminals, is particularly unsettling, as she and her family are so used to intimately knowing nearly everyone in their communities:

> My mom lives in Garrison. It's along the lake there and it's a smaller community. That was a town where when you went to the grocery store, you knew everybody. And as they've built RV parks and all the people coming in and, of course, the rash of burglaries, my mom has said it's a different feel. You go to the grocery store and you don't know half the people now. It's different.

She also recounted that her brother, who lives west of Minot where more oil exploration and production take place, now keeps guns in his house for protection, which is completely anathema to the values with which she was raised.

This idea of outsiders being culturally incompatible with North Dakota was also raised by B.S., who felt that oil-based migrants had degraded Minot because they simply could not leave their deviant "big city" attitudes behind:

> With the oil boom and the crime, I just think it's changed Minot. We've got people that don't have a history here and they don't treat it right. I'm sure many people that come are from large urban areas and they're not used to smaller communities like this where we have a low crime rate. And they've added something to the crime rate [laughs] (personal interview).

Rep. Maragos furthered this discourse, arguing that much of the crime and disorder in the Bakken could be traced to new residents not adapting to the small town culture that many North Dakotans hold dear:

> When I was growing up, when the basketball game was over, everybody went down to the bar. That's where the social life was in the evening. So, when all that money came flying in and then we brought all of those people from outside of the state that came in for these jobs, they were used to [individually participating in] other activities [drinking] that were heretofore community activities … All of these people that come to North Dakota, they say there's nothing to do here and yadda yadda yadda. That was a real culture shock for a lot of 'em, small town North Dakota. So they found other avenues of spending their money and unfortunately the criminal elements were giving them an alternative (personal interview).

L.A. raised an argument rather similar to what Maragos indicated, although he felt that the cultural mismatch was due not to newcomers finding fault with Minot's existing landscape, but with these in-migrants bringing with them the same boomtown culture they have brought to every major oil project: "We've got a problem. I don't know if I blame that on the Bakken. We certainly had the same problem when they built the railroads. You're always going to have hangers on and the baggage people coming in" (personal interview).

Indeed, many respondents took particular exception to these "boomtown values", arguing that they were particularly damaging to younger Minot residents who were particularly susceptible to the devil-may-care attitude that seemed to accompany Minot's economic rise. Rep. Maragos argued that because many of the in-migrants were single

men without families and with no intention of staying in North Dakota permanently, they did not develop positive community ties that would have discouraged them from participating in a reckless, carousing lifestyle, which Maragos felt was a gateway to criminal activity. Y.P., who had previously worked as a housekeeper at an oil industry crew camp, and E.T., the speech therapist at the local hospital, noted during separate focus groups that they saw firsthand many young, local oilworkers succumb to the very lifestyle that Maragos warned of, often with disastrous results:

> There's nothing for those people to do [in the man camp], so they'd go to the bar. Well, then you have a safety issue because you've got drunk drivers on the road. And now kids who are 21, they get the influence of, "Oh! The work crew goes to the bar." You've been working 16-18 hours and then you're going to go to the bar before you take a shower and get to bed for 3, 4, 5 hours before you get up and go do another shift. Which is ridiculous (Y.P., personal focus group).

> In the hospital I was kind of blown away at how many oil workers had drug overdoses and that wasn't reported. I don't know what to even say about it. There were a lot of 25, 30 year old guys that just couldn't handle the money and once they had a stroke they honestly thought they'd be going back to work over the weekend. I mean just no concept of how this was different (E.T., personal focus group).

C.L., a 58-year-old IT professional, and B.H. were present alongside Y.P. at the latter focus group and largely concurred with her assessment, arguing that they had seen these problems manifest themselves among Minot's youth. C.L. noted that she saw many high school students drop out to work in the oilfields as they were lured by the promise of six-figure salaries. However, she said that many of these same students were now struggling to maintain their previous free-spending lifestyles because they can no longer find industry work: "How do some of these young kids make it? They have a new house and

they drive a new Suburban. I keep thinking that they must live on credit cards. They'd have to" (personal focus group). B.H. told a similar, although far more personal, story about his teenage son damaging his future by focusing his post-school plans solely on employment as a roughneck:

> A lot of kids were seduced by the fast money and flashy trucks they saw rolling through town. My son kept talking about how he didn't wanna go to college because was just gonna get a job in the oilfield when he graduated. And now, he's one year away and he's not gonna go work in the oilfields [due to lack of jobs during the slowdown]. Now they're going to be very selective …So, he's kind of in a pickle because he hasn't been paying much attention to his studies as it is. So now he's gotta come up with a different gameplan. And I'm telling him, "Don't burn your bridges because there aren't that many bridges anymore" (personal focus group).

Other respondents, though, argued that despite boomtown culture being a negative influence, most youth were already simply more entitled than in previous generations, lacking the work ethic and respect for authority upon which North Dakotans pride themselves. 83-year-old S.B., a former grain farmer and current shipping plant supervisor for an agricultural chemical firm, argues that he has trouble retaining local youth as employees because they lack loyalty to his employer and would rather work for higher salaries in the oil industry than live and work on the farm like their ancestors. Indeed, S.B., much like B.H. in the preceding paragraph, complained that young men only cared about money and were obsessed with oversized diesel "trucks" as they saw them as inherent to the roughneck lifestyle, unlike the small, utilitarian "pickups" that he has always seen as tools for work and transportation. S.B. ultimately argued that the immigrants that he hired on temporary work visas were better workers than local youth: "It's a good thing we can hire these Mexicans, because they're actually excited about the

job and show up on time" (personal interview). L.H., who worked as a manager at Hardee's following the flood, also argued that she prioritized hiring foreign workers because she could not find reliable employees among the local youth:

> Here, being a manager, I'm like, "Ok. I've got this applicant coming in. They worked for 2 days and quit. And then went to another job." … so, we brought in workers on school visas from Colombia because we were so desperate for help. And they were the best workers ever because they just wanted to make money to take home" (personal interview).

L.H. and C.P. both noted that they never would have quit jobs or not put in their best effort during their own youths, with C.P. remarking, "Back when we were in high school and stuff, that was the thing. Everybody had such a work ethic. Even as a kid. I mean, you had to work. You showed up when you were supposed to. You communicated with your manager. If you were told to clean toilets you just did it" (personal interview).

This narrative of willfully disobedient youth choosing leisure over accomplishment was also advanced by two of our most elderly respondents, L.A., 96, and L.L., 87. L.A., a proud World War II veteran who frequently touts the personal sacrifices he and his fellow service members made, argued that the present culture in which "everybody has a right to do their own thing" is a "privileged position" that members of his generation had to sacrifice their lives for. He went on to elaborate that the outcome of this ethos was consumption of marijuana, which, echoing Rep. Maragos, was a gateway to both hard drugs and criminal activity. L.L. largely replicated L.A.'s position, although he also noted that due to Minot not offering youth much in the way of positive employment or fulfilling leisure activities, drugs would naturally fill such a void.

In summary, the majority of respondents felt that increased economic activity related to the oil industry had not only changed Minot's economic landscape, but has also negatively impacted the very specific culture that residents felt provided the city with its positive quality of life. Specifically, respondents were particularly concerned that crime had taken root in Minot due to a general decline in community values in favor of a libertine, boomtown culture. Respondents largely felt that much of this decline was due to outsiders bringing this negative mentality with them to Minot and corrupting local youth, rather than a distinct upsurge in anti-social behavior on the part of long-term residents. However, a significant minority argued that much of this cultural shift could also be blamed on a sense of entitlement on the part of Minot's younger population, which manifested itself in a lack of work ethic and inclination to adopt a reckless lifestyle that mirrored that of many oil-connected in-migrants.

Residents, however, largely refrained from blaming the oil and gas industry for the decline of community values and the increase in crime. Critics such as WWII veteran L.A. specifically argued that while these negative externalities had happened because suspect "baggage people" were lured to the Bakken because of the boom, he felt that such problems had also occurred for the exact same reason's during Minot's previous industrial booms such as the building of the railroads. Indeed, while other residents were not as direct in making the connection to past boom and bust cycles, they frequently highlighted how newcomers were attracted to Minot by moneymaking opportunities (whether legal or illegal), which they argued were a feature of many of the boom and bust times that Minot had seen before, with the oil boom simply being the current vehicle through which the attraction happened.

While it cannot be said definitively why respondents chose to blame newcomers themselves rather than the oil boom that has caused them to come to Minot, there are two plausible explanations, both of which are connected to the positive role of oil development in strengthening North Dakota's economy and identity. First, the successful penetration of the *Homo Dakoticus* ideology into the populace. Especially among elderly male respondents, Bakken oil was strongly linked with ensuring America's national security through reducing oil imports from politically suspect nations. This strongly aligned with other productivist narratives, such as the importance of North Dakota's agricultural economy as both a source of wealth creation, but also a key linchpin in ensuring Minot's place as a center of cross-border trade with Canada. In short, a significant minority of respondents truly believed that North Dakota had a major role to play in the overall US geopolitical landscape and that Bakken oil was the current method through which the state could contribute. Second, in connection with our underlying themes of privilege and blame, the majority of respondents believed that despite certain grievances, the oil boom was a positive development for Minot, both in terms of economic benefits, as well as the improvement in the city's national reputation. K.N., the Lutheran pastor, summarized such a feeling succinctly: "Western North Dakota has always had this end of the world reputation … but the Bakken lifts people's spirits. They need us. We're the place that actually has jobs. North Dakota is finally good for something other than durum [wheat] and sunflowers" (personal interview). Thus, while respondents will freely admit that there are real and significant downsides to the Bakken boom, these are far outweighed by the positive changes the boom has brought to Minot.

Yet at the same time that many respondents blamed Minot's problems on the influence of outsiders, there was also a general admission that the "old Minot" that they viewed so nostalgically did not offer much in the way of real career or lifestyle opportunities for young people. As we will see in our next section, while some respondents felt that the Bakken boom brought much positive economic change to Minot, others believed that the any benefits were merely cosmetic, hiding the unaddressed fundamental political and economic problems that caused Minot's post-1960 stagnation, which they argued would be re-exposed by a long-term decline in oil activity.

6.4.3 What future for boomtown Minot?

While the preceding section (6.4.2) may have painted a rather gloomy picture regarding respondents' opinions about the boom-related social changes in Minot, responses about the boom's economic impacts have been far more positive. Specifically, respondents argued that Minot was now seen as a place to make a good living (due to the growth of both oil-related businesses and the service sector), rather than a place from which to escape due to lack of opportunity, countering the old adage that, "North Dakota is a place you're from, not a place you live." Although some residents expressed trepidation about the city becoming too reliant on the cyclical oil industry, nearly all felt that Minot would have a strong economic future if the city's boom-related economic and reputational gains could be invested in securing a post-oil future. Many respondents, felt North Dakota would be forced into post-oil situations sooner rather than later. Respondents felt that if the city were to succeed in the post-oil period, the city government, its business class and some of its more culturally stubborn residents would

need to invest in the educational, career-training and physical infrastructures necessary to facilitate the city's transition toward a contemporary urban city and away from the small, agricultural support town model that has persisted despite Minot's rapid growth during the boom years.

Perhaps the most serious issue respondents saw as underlying Minot's stagnation has been limited education and career opportunities for young people, especially for those seeking white collar jobs outside of the oil and gas industry. Although political leaders such as Rep. Maragos have served as longtime champions (and boosters) of North Dakota's students and educational system (see chapter 4), many respondents argued that Minot's low-tax, anti-spending political culture has led to the city's purportedly underfunded public school system being unable to adequately serve the city's school-age population, which has grown tremendously since the beginning of the boom.[38] During their joint interview, L.H. (a mother of 3) and C.P. (a mother of 2) both felt that the city government and Minot's populace were not doing enough to help counter this surge in enrollment. The pair argued that the student population increase combined with the closing of several schools following the flood had made the educational experience significantly worse for their children:

> L.H.: The school where my 8-year-old is at is super crowded and they have the entire 4th and 5th graders outside in portables.
> C.P.: By the time he [L.H.'s son] went to kindergarten they had 700 kindergarteners in the entire system. And that was before Erik Ramstad [Middle School] flooded. That meant there wouldn't be enough room at Ramstad or Jim Hill [Middle School]. So they had to do something at that

[38] Minot Public Schools total K-12 enrollment grew from 6,193 in May 2007 to 7,593 as of October 2017, an increase of 1,400 students or ~23% (Johnson, 2017).

> point. They knew that any way. Well, then it flooded. They built the new Erik Ramstad …
> L.H.: Well, and then they lost Lincoln [Elementary] School. Perkett [Elementary School] was out for a while. And Ramstad. Longfellow [Elementary School]. I mean, all those schools that flooded. They had nowhere to put them. We flooded in June. School started in August. What was going to happen?

Both L.H. (a vocal conservative) and C.P. (a vocal liberal) felt that much of the blame for the failure to provide adequately school space was due to the short-sightedness of Minot's conservative taxpayers in rejecting bonds to fund school construction[39]:

> C.P.: The school board has made progress. But, you know, every time the school board has tried to make progress, they've been voted down completely. It's the community. They don't want to raise their taxes.
> L.H.: They don't want our taxes to go up, because that's what's happening. You know, when they came out with that bond the people voted it down in December [2013] … What are they called … the old-timers. We need to kick the old-timers out because …
> C.P.: We're not a progressive community.
> L.H.: We're not progressing anywhere because they're stuck in their own ways.

Mark Vollmer, Minot Public Schools' current superintendent, also felt that the community's tax and spending aversions have stifled Minot's attempted recovery from the flood due to the strong pressure they exerted that ultimately led to the city council slashing property tax rates after the flood. Vollmer, who felt that the school system would be in serious financial danger without the additional tax revenue created by oil-industry-related

[39] Minot voters rejected a comprehensive $125,000,000 bond in December 2013 that would have built two new middle schools and a second high school. Voters did, however, accept a scaled down $40,000,000 bond in May 2014 that solely covered the cost of two new elementary schools (Johnson, 2016).

construction[40], argued that the chances of building either new elementary schools or a badly-needed second high school were extremely low given the strong antipathy voters had to any public projects: “This is coming from an older, conservative male, but we are not a progressive community. We seem to be nervous about growth … People say we’re trying to build the Taj Mahal. We just want a good school that won’t have the roof blow away every time the wind blows” (personal interview). Indeed, while Vollmer sympathized with struggling younger parents not wanting to pay extra taxes, he argued that apathy on the part of the city council and longer-term residents would ultimately push the school system to the breaking point:

> “We’ve lost over $2,000,000 just this year [2016] due to declining enrollment from people leaving town [due to layoffs/inability to find work], but we’re still at plus-1,600 kids since 2007 … A lot of people are just content to sit around and kick the can down the road. But if you sit around and make decisions, then the decisions are kind of made for you” (personal interview).

Another concern was for students who had already finished schooling (whether through graduation or dropping out) and a distinct lack of long-term career options that would motivate young Minoters to remain in the city as adults. B.H., the father who worried about his academically-disinclined son’s post-high school career prospects, argued that not enough was being done by the city government to attract non-service sector and non-oil industry jobs for those without college degrees:

---

[40] From 2011-2015, Minot collected an annual average of $213.3 million in building permit fees. The effects of the slowdown can be seen through figured for 2016-2017, in which an average of only $55 million per year was collected. Although the dollar amount of building fees before 2011 is not readily available, the number of residential building permits issued from 2006-2010 was 344 per year, compared to 1,061 per year from 2011-2015 and 64 per year from 2016-2017 (Minot Chamber of Commerce, 2017).

> It was just service industry, service industry, service industry. I don't know if they were actually trying to bring in manufacturing or anything else. I don't know if it was because they would go out and say, "We tried to bring a manufacturing plant," but the manufacturing people would say, "No, we don't wanna build there because all your blue collar workers can go and work in the oilfields. So, how are we gonna get people?" (personal focus group).

B.H., who counted himself as lucky to have purchased a home before the boom when prices were low, also felt that such an opportunity would not be available to his son and other young residents due to the lack of middle class jobs outside of the oil industry (personal focus group). This was echoed by Y.P., who argued that many working class young people who would have been able to afford to live in Minot in the pre-boom days, were now unable to make ends meet due to being stuck in what she viewed as an over-saturation of food service jobs: "they [business leaders in Minot] need to create an economic situation that benefits young people. And this being a town of hamburgers and hot dogs isn't going to get you that … You need a livable wage so there's an incentive to stay" (personal focus group). Similarly, John MacMartin of the Minot Chamber noted that while Minot (and the Bakken at large) has been successful in encouraging natives to return during the boom, workers in traditional blue collar jobs in construction and the military faced significant housing troubles due to competition from boom-enticed newcomers that did not exist prior to the oil boom:

> In many instances, they [Minot natives who had moved away] were amenable to the opportunities to come back and work in their chosen field at a salary commensurate to what they were making elsewhere. But especially for the unskilled labor, the ability to pay them enough that they could afford the housing became the real issue … And when they got here maybe there was no place to live (personal interview).

In addition to concerns about blue collar employment, many respondents argued that there has been little to no effort to create white collar jobs, which were seen as key to stemming North Dakota's longstanding reputation of suffering from brain drain (see section 4.3). C.P., the freelance IT consultant, noted that were it not for the increased demand that local telecom operators such as SRT (which previously employed both she and her husband) received from the oil and gas and construction agencies, her family would have likely migrated to either Fargo (home of a large Microsoft campus) or Minneapolis. Indeed, many of her friends in the tech industry had either left Minot for these locations or had gone to work directly for oil and gas companies in the Bakken, due to low wages in the tech industry. C.P., who has been trying in earnest for several years to create a public/private tech incubator in Minot, argued that IT and tech were not valued as highly as oil and gas[41]:

> This still isn't a great place for IT. There's not a lot of companies. There's not a lot of great jobs. I think they got so used to paying a certain wage. Even when the oil companies were coming in and making this [high] wage, IT workers and managers and people in most industries were still kind of down here [lower wage] because businesses don't want to pay what oil companies are paying (personal interview).

This notion of oil and gas being the more valuable industry in Minot was also shared by L.A. However, L.A. felt that while not all white collar jobs needed to be based around oil and gas, without the prosperity the oil industry created, there would be no growth to support such jobs for locals in other industries and therefore no reason for

[41] C.P. and her husband ultimately did leave Minot in the fall of 2017, as they could not find enough clients to support their tech startup.

college-educated Minoters to remain in town: “I think Minot State [local 4-year-college] does a reasonably good job [preparing students for the work force] … But, we’re not going to keep those talented people unless we have a growing industry. And right now we’re not having it” (personal interview). J.A. also echoed L.A.’s concerns, noting that if he were “a parent with a college kid right now” he would encourage his children to look for opportunities outside of Minot due to the city’s up-and-down economic trajectory.

This up-and-down trajectory and the city’s unwillingness to invest in infrastructure and services that might alleviate it was another major point of contention among respondents. While many respondents felt that overall Minot was a much better place as a result of oil boom-related economic growth, they believed that the city was unwilling to spend its newfound tax wealth on necessary improvements due to lingering fears of becoming financially insolvent in the event of an extended low-price downturn. J.S., the pastor’s son, felt that such notions were overly cautious and argued that if Minot wanted to maintain, and ultimately improve, upon its newfound prosperity and positive reputation, members of the city government would need to buck their spending-averse ways in order to serve the city’s expanding population:

> There doesn’t seem to be any planning. If we go fully bust, we don’t want to be affected as badly as others [Bakken cities such as Williston] have been … We need general non-oil infrastructure. We need police and fire and a new hospital. We need resources for job seekers. If oil is low, we may not need these things as much. If oil is high again, quite frankly, we’ve made our billions and we can afford it. If not, then we should have picked better leaders for our city (personal interview).

Many other respondents largely agreed with J.S.’s criticism, although they generally felt that the problem wasn’t a lack of spending, but funding of bad projects at

inopportune times. L.H. felt that Minot's development was being held back by the city's myopic focus on catering to the oil industry and its wealthier, out-of-state employees, especially in their overbuilding of hotels and upscale housing developments. She argued that the city was misusing the MAGIC Fund (a tax-funded economic development fund) to lure large corporations (which she felt often failed to deliver on promises of creating permanent jobs) at the expense of community projects such as parks and recreation and the city's chronically-troubled recycling plant (personal interview). This pattern of local elites being enthralled with the oil industry at the expense of community-based businesses and organizations was furthered by J.O., a business professor and regional development strategist who has conducted several economic growth studies for the City of Minot. J.O. argued that despite oil raising North Dakota's national profile, Minot has been unable to attract significant non-oil investment due to local investors being scared off by bad memories of the 1980s oil bust and out-of-state investors viewing the Bakken as, "a mining colony on the moon." This lack of a concrete growth engine thus forced the city government to rely almost completely on the oil industry and support businesses (especially hotels) for revenue, as they were unwilling to take risks on projects that may not yield immediate growth (personal interview). This hotel-centric development strategy was seen as a foolish gamble by many elderly respondents who believed that the boom had already reached its zenith, with J.A. accusing developers of "panic building", S.M. questioning the logic of stockpiling hotel space for a non-existent future boom and L.L. referring to 2012 (in which 12 hotels were constructed) as, "the year I could not believe" (personal interviews).

While this incredulity on the part of older residents about supposedly shortsighted growth strategies could easily be passed off as the idle grumbling of curmudgeons, respondents of all ages felt that the city government and business community's rush to capitalize on the oil boom (through both aggressive recruitment of oil and gas businesses and through spending on industry priorities such as the airport expansion) had had a negative impact on the agricultural industry, which residents felt was frequently put at a disadvantage due to competition with the wealthier and higher-paying oil industry. Superintendent Vollmer, who is himself a part-time farmer, argued that by focusing so much on creating a favorable economic environment for the oil and gas industry and its allies in the construction and transportation sectors,, the Minot city government and the city's business class had neglected the needs of agricultural producers, whom he felt had been hurt badly by labor and transport competition from the oil and gas industry. Vollmer argued that agriculture had been fundamental to Minot's successes long before oil (and he argued, would remain so after oil extraction was no longer viable) and thus, "needs to be embraced." Similarly, L.A., who grew up on a farm near Bismarck, felt that while oil had certainly been important for North Dakota during the past decade, it was, in fact, the agrochemical revolution and resultant increased yields in the 1990s that had fueled North Dakota's success in "the capitalistic adventure" before anyone in North Dakota had ever heard of fracking (personal interview).[42] This rugged, individualist image of the savvy prairie farmer was also nurtured by B.T., who argued that despite western North Dakota

[42] The veracity of this claim is disputable. While North Dakota usually ranks first or second in annual wheat production, production in the state has decreased dramatically since its all-time peak in 1992. Per acre yields, however, have increased dramatically in the past 25 years (North Dakota Wheat Commission, 2018).

being a historically depressed area, it was the farmer who, “supplied us either in good times or bad times.” B.T. went on to posit that while boosters in state and local government and the business community felt the oil boom was the vehicle through which the Bakken would be permanently lifted out of poverty, many more traditional residents, himself included, felt that the boom’s negative lifestyle changes (rising cost of housing, fear for one’s personal safety, traffic, etc.) outweighed any economic gains and that these residents would openly welcome a reversion to this previous depressed, yet “secure” state (personal interview).[43]

Thus, to summarize this section, while there were a variety of respondent viewpoints as to what sort of future Minot should pursue beyond being a boomtown, nearly all respondents felt that a broadening of the city’s economy beyond oil and beyond the service and manual-labor sectors would be a necessary pre-requisite for forging this new identity. Indeed, while there were clearly differences of opinion as to whether a return to Minot’s pre-boom landscape was desirable, there was a general consensus that any boom or post-boom prosperity would need to leveraged to make Minot a desirable place to live and work for both young and old, rich and poor, and conservative or progressive alike. Achieving this would require a re-orientation away from the city’s overly cautious approach to budgeting and general reticence to make bold decisions.

[43] It should be noted that while many respondents waxed nostalgic about the supposedly better quality of life that existed before the boom, B.T. and a fellow Know It All, R.S., were the only respondents in the sample who openly stated that they wished the boom had not happened.

6.5 Conclusion

The changes that Minot has faced as a result of oil and gas-related economic and population growth can be summarized as follows: (1) its physical and infrastructural landscape has been radically transformed to meet the needs of its (post-)industrial landscape organized around the oil and gas industry; (2) the political economic and technological shifts that have enabled the city's transformation have also led to dramatic, and often discomforting, changes in its sociocultural milieu; and (3) recent disruptions in the form of flooding (physical) and the post-2015 price-related downturn (economic) have served to simultaneously punctuate both Minot's newfound growth and social equilibria. However, despite the major changes in the city's economic character, this chapter argues that contestation over moral and community values has been most important to determining Minot's boomtown (or more recently, busttown) identity. This debate has been of particular importance to this study's respondents, all of whom are longer-term (more than five years) residents of Minot with longstanding social and identity ties to the city that predate the fracking boom. Indeed, while all respondents had strong opinions on the city's physical and economic changes (with some being personally affected by boom and bust cycles), the greatest anxiety was expressed in regard to boom-related changes to deep-seated cultural norms, especially the rapid changes that occurred as a result of the above-mentioned punctures. Furthermore, many respondents viewed changes in the economic landscape as direct reflections of a community values shift that created the political atmosphere that privileges the oil and gas and service industries over more traditional industries such as agriculture. Thus, for at least one segment of Minot's

population from which this study draws (longer-term permanent residents, whose livelihoods are mostly not directly entangled with oil and gas), boomtown disruption has been largely a sociocultural, rather than an economic, phenomenon.

In light of existing literatures on ethnographic studies of fracking boomtowns (2.3), this chapter serves as a counterpoint to the over-represented activist framing that is common in studies from plays such as the Marcellus (PA), Barnett (TX) and Niobrara (CO) shales. Building on analysis from Chapter 4 (*Homo Dakoticus*), data analyzed for this chapter showed a clear preference among respondents for community values of respect, mutual assistance and against divisive political and personal behavior. When this is considered in concert with respondents being drawn from a longer-term population without a significant personal stake in the success of the oil industry and which has largely avoided many of the negative economic, environmental and health aspects related to proximity to extraction (each of which have been identified in 2.3 as key reasons why local residents turn against fracking), it becomes clear that activism is an unlikely response. Indeed, activism would be seen as counterproductive given the optimism respondents expressed about harnessing boom revenues and reputational benefits in order to spur positive urban development for an inevitable post-fracking future.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter frames the findings of this dissertation in terms of the relevant literatures. First, this chapter will review the key findings from each of the dissertation's substantive chapters (4, 5 and 6). Second, this chapter will examine the dissertation's contributions to literatures on geographies of energy and natural resources, social science studies of fracking and case studies of environmental subjectivities in extractive landscapes that were introduced in the literature review (chapter 2). Finally, this chapter will discuss future research possibilities on fracking in the Bakken.

7.2 Key findings

7.2.1 Homo Dakoticus

Chapter 4 employed elite-actor interviews and participant observation to analyze efforts by political and business elites to create a pro-oil ideology and subjectivity among North Dakota's population. This chapter built on the *Homo Energeticus/Homo Alberticus* literatures to argue that a particular pro-oil subjectivity has emerged in North Dakota, which I called *Homo Dakoticus*. The *Homo Dakoticus* ideology frames fracking as consistent with North Dakota's existing societal values system. Elites have promoted fracking as a normal facet of free-market development. Specifically, elites have incorporated pro-oil rhetoric within existing discourses centered on North Dakota's traditional character as a state which prioritizes "common sense" approaches to economic organization and governance over unproven, potentially complicated approaches. The

three major discursive themes explored in this chapter were: 1.) the North Dakota Way; 2.) North Dakota exceptionalism; and 3.) resiliency.

The North Dakota Way is a behavioral code that emphasizes patriotism, tried-and-true economic approaches and individual sacrifice for the greater good. This chapter discovered that oil and gas elites used the Way to argue that fracking-led development is compatible with North Dakota's existing cultural and economic landscapes as it produces immediate and tangible economic results and promotes widespread prosperity for economically depressed Bakken communities. Moreover, the Way was assigned causal power, as elites argued that North Dakota's welcoming, business-friendly environment - which allowed the oil and gas industry to succeed - was a natural outgrowth of citizens' devotion to the tenets of the Way. Additionally, this chapter found that elites used the Way to frame opposition to extraction as inappropriate. Fracking opponents were cast as directly violating North Dakotans' preference for consensus and community cohesion over contentious debates that have the potential to destabilize the successful economic conditions that oil and gas has produced.

American exceptionalism is the belief that the United States and the American people are exceptional when compared to other countries and other populations. I posited that a particular variant of this ideology – Dakota exceptionalism – can be found among North Dakotans regarding their own exceptional status when compared to other states. This chapter found that political and oil and gas elites view North Dakota as doubly-exceptional due to both the tremendous resources of the Bakken and the state's highly-educated, hardworking and moral population. (Notably, other states are said to be jealous of this characteristic.) The careful investment of the gains from the Bakken, these elites

argue, is yielding new opportunities that allow for the state's tremendous human capital to be used in the most efficient way. In what can best be described as hubris, an oil and gas lobbyist described these intertwined blessings of Bakken and citizen as the driving forces behind the revitalization of rural America. Thus, this chapter determined that appeals to Dakota exceptionalism serve to flatter North Dakota's population with the goal of normalizing the Bakken as an indispensable part of what makes Dakota - and Dakotans - exceptional.

In the case of North Dakota, resiliency refers to the supposedly exceptional toughness that North Dakotans possess, which grants them the ability to endure and recover from any hardship they may face. This stereotype is derived from the purported moral and physical toughening North Dakota homesteaders endured in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This chapter discovered that the resiliency stereotype was used by policy elites to convince the public of the importance of supporting the oil and gas industry despite any negative externalities that it might produce. Indeed, this point was emphasized by elites during the 2015-2016 production slowdown to convince North Dakotans that the sluggish economy and rising crime were only temporary setbacks. Residents would be rewarded with a stronger economy if they were able to remain patient and prepare themselves for a higher-price environment. Thus, this chapter determined that resiliency was successful both because it appealed to founding myths that resonated in a traditional state and because it helped to soothe anxieties about the permanence of oil and gas during a period when many residents were skeptical of its long-term validity.

Overall, the key findings from Chapter 4 can be summarized as follows. First, Oil and gas elites combined pro-oil rhetoric with existing ideologies and discourses that

support capitalism and patriotism and discourage activism against government and the business sector. Second, attempts to create the *Homo Dakoticus* functioned through appeals to North Dakotan individual importance in protecting the oil industry (and by extension American national security), thus providing a personal connection between residents and the oil and gas industry. Third, pro-oil discourses depicted fracking-led development as a natural extension of North Dakotans productivist economic tradition, thus providing the impression for North Dakotans that support for the industry is rational whereas opposition is both irrational and contrary to established tradition. The discourses underpinning the *Homo Dakoticus* subject position were used as a baseline to evaluate further discourses used by editorial writers (Chapter 5) and by Minot's longer-term residents.

7.2.2 Bakken newspaper editorial analysis

Chapter 5 built on previous studies that examined newspaper coverage of fracking and related development. Despite providing a foundation for discourse-based studies of fracking, these studies have largely ignored editorial coverage and have not addressed the Bakken. Therefore, this chapter sought to contribute to this literature by focusing on editorials and letters-to-the editor written in five North Dakota newspapers, 4 of which are published in communities in the Bakken. Following a purposive sampling procedure (see 3.6.2), this chapter focused on two highly-contested topics highly relevant to the Bakken's oil and gas industry: 1.) Measure 5 (M5), a defeated 2014 state-wide ballot measure that would have allowed to oil production tax revenue to be spent on conservation projects; and 2.) The Keystone XL pipeline (KXL) and its role in both the Bakken and the United

States as a whole. (The KXL route does not include North Dakota, but existing portions of the Keystone system pass through Eastern North Dakota). The articles were separated into two categories: pro-industry positions (M5 opposition and KXL support) and anti-industry positions (M5 support and KXL opposition).

This chapter found that both M5-supportive and M5-oppositional writers framed their arguments in terms of the effects the amendment would have on North Dakota's rural and outdoor heritage, private property rights, and agricultural economy. M5 opponents aggressively opposed the measure, relying on emotionally-charged arguments to make their case. They argued that allowing M5 would disadvantage rural landowners and recreational users by placing needless and expensive restrictions on how land could be used and by whom. Writers felt that such restrictions would go against the state's longstanding tradition of property-owner decision making and would allow well-funded, out-of-state environmentalist groups to purchase large tracts of land that would then be taken out of productivist use.

In contrast, M5 supporters avoided emotional appeals, employing fact-based arguments that emphasized the minimal disruption the measure would cause. M5 supporters argued that the measure would, in fact, improve outdoor heritage, property rights, and farming by allowing landowners a greater number of options for land management in collaboration with state agencies. Contrary to M5 opponents, supporters argued that the conservationist ethic behind the measure was fully in line with the state's land-management traditions and would help to honor the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt, a cherished political icon within North Dakota. This chapter concluded that M5 opponents were ultimately unsuccessful in their strategy as they expended more energy on

attempting to refute opponents' arguments than in crafting an effective narrative of their own.

Whereas both supporters and opponents of M5 developed the same themes in their arguments, supporters and .opponents of KXL emphasized different issues in arguing their cases. Supporters sought to frame the pipeline as a rational, economically sound decision with little inherent risk, whereas opponents argued against the pipeline on social and environmental justice grounds. KXL supporters (pro-industry position) framed KXL as a logical necessity for a nation seeking to build on the prosperity that increased North American oil and gas production has created. They argued that not only were there few environmental or economic risks associated with the pipeline, but that the pipeline was critical for improving national security by strengthening an American alliance with Canada (a friendly exporter of fossil fuels, unlike Russia or OPEC nations). Additionally, supporters leaned strongly on the notion that KXL would carry Bakken crude alongside the tar sands (something not guaranteed), thus making the pipeline another vehicle for economic growth within the state.

KXL opponents, however, sought to emphasize the inherent dangers that the pipeline presented for property rights, national security and environmental contamination. Writers were particularly concerned about KXL more than other pipelines, as it would carry heaver, more toxic oil sands, rather than conventional oil, which they argued made the pipeline more likely to cause widespread contamination in the event of an accident. Additionally, writers felt that the pipeline was a net negative for national security as it would largely carry Canadian (and not Bakken) oil, much of which, they argued, would be destined for eventual export, thus robbing American consumers of any benefits. Other

writers were animated by property rights issues, arguing that rural landowners were being treated unfairly in eminent domain cases and that the pipeline represented a significant challenge to tribal sovereignty. Finally, KXL opponents sought to argue that politicians supporting the pipeline were fully aware of the aforementioned risks, but were supporting the pipeline due to either campaign contributions from oil and gas interests or were concerned that voting against the pipeline would cost them re-election.

In summary, three key discoveries were made about the ways in which editorial writers approached these two issues. First, writers taking pro-industry positions were more likely than those taking anti-industry positions to frame their arguments in terms of economic gains and losses that would result from M5 of KXL. Second, anti-industry writers were far more concerned than pro-industry writers about social and environmental impacts of the two proposals. Finally, those taking pro-industry positions were far more likely to adopt an aggressive, argumentative tone in their editorials than were anti-industry writers who expended effort on trying to debunk conservative talking points and to demonstrate the factual merits of their proposal. This style often led to editorials that were straightforward, factual presentations when compared with those of pro-industry writers who sought to place their arguments within a personal, narrative framework that sought to connect these issues to deeply held cultural traditions. Although it cannot be determined what effect editorials had on influencing public opinion, the nearly 4-to-1 defeat of M5 during the 2014 election suggests that the pro-industry arguments were at least somewhat persuasive.

7.2.3 Minot residents' views on the oil boom

Chapter 6 employed interviews and focus groups conducted with longer-term (five or more year) residents of Minot, the financial and transportation hub of the Bakken. This chapter argued that discourses used by respondents to discuss the current oil boom mirror those used in previous industrial agricultural booms throughout Minot's 140 year history. This chapter served as a counterpoint to activist-focused case studies of fracking by focusing on residents who are neither directly involved with or directly harmed or enriched by the oil industry. One discovery was that respondents did not directly blame the oil and gas industry for negative externalities that have occurred during the oil boom, choosing instead to cast emerging issues as outgrowths of longstanding cultural and economic issues that predate the boom. The three most prominent "outward discourses" that residents emphasized were: 1.) the relationship between boom-related population growth and its strains on the housing market, especially in the wake of the devastating 2011 Souris River Flood; 2.) the decline of moral values and increase in crime during the boom; and 3.) ruminations on Minot's future after oil and gas is no longer the city's primary economic driver. These outward discourses were viewed as emblematic of unspoken "inward discourses" that underlie much of respondents' openly expressed grievances. These inward discourses were: 1.) the privilege that the oil boom affords longer-term residents and older, more established residents with secure employment and lifestyles; 2.) who or what deserves blame for negative boom externalities; 3.) the role of oil-derived revenue in creating a post-oil future; and 4.) the specific political culture of Minot and North Dakota that discourages contentious debates and supports community cohesion.

This chapter discovered that respondents viewed flood recovery as the most important issue facing Minot more than 4 years after the fact (interviews were conducted between August 2015 and August 2016). Respondents argued that the aftermath of the flood, which destroyed a third of the city's housing stock, was made worse due to housing competition from the oil and gas industry, which made rental costs unaffordable for Minot residents without high-paying oil industry jobs. While some critics blamed unscrupulous landlords – whom they argued used oil industry wages as cover for price gouging - for the city's housing and flood recovery woes, the majority of respondents argued that were it not for the influx of money and the demand for new businesses and construction that accompanied the oil boom, Minot would not have been able to make any significant recovery. Critics in this camp argued that it was, in fact, the city government that was to blame for the city's housing shortage and incomplete recovery due to its overzealous efforts to cater to the oil and gas industry, which resulted in the needs of Minot's existing population being ignored. Thus, the outward housing and flood troubles discourse leaned heavily on the inward blame discourse, seeking to assign responsibility not to the oil and gas industry, but to landlords and the city government who sought to prioritize the needs of the oil industry over those of longer-term residents in order to maximize profit.

Respondents argued that while the oil boom had coincided with a rise in crime, it was individual criminals and their lack of morals that were responsible rather than the oil and gas industry or its actions. This chapter found that respondents were suspicious of in-migrants from outside of North Dakota, whom respondents believed did not share their culture or their moral values. In particular, it was found that outsiders were viewed as being unfriendly and not interested in helping their fellow community members, unwilling

to work hard and as possessing permissive, “big city” attitudes towards sex and drugs. Respondents argued that it was this incompatibility with Minot’s existing conservative, community-minded culture – as well as unwillingness to embrace North Dakota’s slower-paced, simpler lifestyle – that caused respondents to engage in reckless and/or criminal behavior. Additionally, respondents felt that in-migrants, many of whom conspicuously flaunted their oil employment wealth, were a negative influence on Minot’s under-30 population, whom respondents argued were unwilling to work hard or focus on the education necessary to get jobs outside of the oil industry, which was seen as prone to hirings and firings due to changes in oil prices. Thus, while the crime and morality outward discourse was, like housing and the flood, animated by the inward blame discourse, the privilege discourse also played a major role as older, more economically secure respondents cast themselves as guardians of morality and right thinking.

However, much of this sanctimony disappeared when respondents addressed Minot’s potential post-oil future. Respondents argued that the city would need to use tax revenue collected from the economic boom in order to invest in the infrastructure needed to make Minot comparable to its peer cities such as Fargo and Minneapolis, both of which have been successful in transitioning from industrial/agricultural to knowledge economies. The most important aspects of this transition, respondents argued, would be investments from the city government to improve the city’s schools and aggressive lobbying to attract businesses outside of the oil industry, military and service sectors, which were seen as crucial to providing a future for young people in Minot. Respondents felt that this would require a fundamental shift away from Minot’s low-tax, spending-averse culture (on the part of both city government and conservative voters alike), which

they argued was the reason for Minot's 50-year economic stagnation that preceded the Bakken boom. Thus, not only was the oil industry considered blameless, but it was viewed as the vehicle through which improvements for the post-oil future could be funded.

In summary, chapter 6 identified outward discourses, none of which sought to blame oil directly, and underlying discourses, which show context in which lack of denunciations of the oil industry can be situated. In addition to the privilege, blame and post-oil discourses, North Dakota's political culture of consensus-based politics and community cohesion encouraged residents to avoid denouncing the oil industry directly or to advocate for radical political change. Indeed, the harshest political criticisms of the city government – which has always been Republican dominated – were from self-identified conservatives, who argued that politicians had become addicted to oil industry money and had lost sight of Minot's "real" priorities. Thus, this chapter found that fracking-led development in Minot did not inspire activism, due to both strong political and cultural traditions discouraging such behavior and the view that economic outcomes of the boom were desirable.

7.3 Connections between key findings and existing literature

This dissertation is situated broadly within three bodies of literature: geographies of resources and energy, social science studies of fracking and environmental subjectivities in extractive landscapes. The three key gaps that this study sought to remedy were: 1.) The paucity of case studies of fossil fuels in geographies of resources and energy; 2.) The lack of effective connection between local extractive outcomes and broader-scale discourses and economic processes; 3.) The lack of engagement with

subjectivities theory in fracking case studies and related over-reliance on the boomtown sociology framework. This subsection examines how this dissertation's three substantive chapters addressed these gaps and how these findings contribute to these three bodies of literature.

7.3.1 Geographies of fossil fuels

Within geographies of energy, the majority of case study research has been focused on either non-energy extractive landscapes or on renewable-energy landscapes. This work has provided a framework for examining how local cultural and political economic conditions impact on-the-ground outcomes of development across spaces and scales, but with few exceptions researchers have not applied this same vigor to landscapes of fossil fuels. Studies of fracking landscapes are especially scarce. This dissertation has partially remedied this issue by examining the localized outcomes of fracking in the Bakken Shale. Building on work by scholars working in renewable energy landscapes such as Fast et al. (2016), Armstrong and Bulkeley (2014) and Devine-Wright (2009), this dissertation has found that the cultural milieu of Minot and North Dakota – in this case the ideology of the North Dakota Way – has a profound effect on how residents approach and interpret the effects of the Bakken oil boom in their daily lives. Indeed, resident's attitudes to oil development are strongly tied to residents' connection to their community and the perceived violation that extractive development and its externalities represent. This finding supports those of Fast et al. (2016) and Armstrong and Bulkeley (2014). However, where this study's findings differed from renewables studies was in its discovery that the externalities were a challenge not only to landscape values or

perceived economic changes, but also to residents strongly held moral framework. Boom-related growth not only created new points of conflict, but also exacerbated many festering community issues that were seen as deeply connected to both moral and political economic issues. Thus, these findings have more in common with research on non-energy extractive landscapes through new economic logics (LeClerc & Keeling, 2015; Foley, Mather & Neis, 2015), which have found that re-invigorating depleted landscapes (with Minot serving as a strong example due to its post-1960 economic stagnation) is as much about changes to values systems as it is about introducing new economic mechanisms.

This dissertation also makes contributions to literature in geographies of energy focused on neo-extractivism. While research in this subcategory has traditionally focused on the Latin American context, this dissertation has discovered similarities in the Bakken context that connect with themes from the literature. First, this dissertation found that the state plays a significant role in creating ideology with the goal of convincing local populations of the economic, political and even moral imperative behind extraction, similar to reports of Valdivia (2015) and Obeng-Odoom (2014). Second, many of the neo-extractive discourses regarding extraction as a method for overcoming large-scale economic and political problems, described by Davidov (2013) and van Teijlingen (2016) are also present in the Bakken. Scholars have reported that in Latin America extraction is seen as a way to resist the negative aspects of globalization, American imperialism and the financial crises seen as inherent to neoliberalism (Ruckert, McDonald, & Proulx, 2017); in North Dakota, elites and ordinary respondents frame extraction as the blessing that allowed North Dakota to beat the Great Recession and as a vehicle for the creation

of future diverse in economies in rural areas that have undergone decades of decline. This dissertation suggests the usefulness of applying neo-extractivism to first world contexts, much as McCarthy (2002) and others have done for political ecology more broadly.

Building specifically on the work done in Matthew Huber's *Lifeblood* (2013) this dissertation contextualizes oil-related development in North Dakota within broader political and ideological questions such as the role of oil in maintaining/destabilizing national security, the need for fossil fuels to maintain the lifestyles of North Dakotans and the prosperity of the state's economy. Such themes can be seen in the dissertation's analysis of the *Homo Dakoticus* subjectivity and accompanying ideology the North Dakota Way (chapter 4), which place a premium on upholding the stereotypical American values of freedom, patriotism and private property identified by Huber as necessary for maintaining the high-consumption status quo under post-WWII carbon capitalism. Indeed, North Dakota's present political culture, which is guided by the ethos of avoiding contentious debates, confirms Huber's notion of suburban and rural portions of the United States located away from the East and West Coasts as laboratories for, "the construction of a kind neopeasantry where *politics* often becomes constrained within "narrow limits" focused on the family, private property, and anticollectivist sentiments" (p. 79). However, this dissertation differs from Huber's analysis by moving beyond a general American notion of the role of oil as lifeblood by examining the role of oil in structuring life in a specific site presently experiencing the effects of oil extraction. Such an approach moves beyond examining the purportedly widespread attitudes of a nebulous "American" public

to examining the specific subjectivities produced by the re-organization of life in Minot in order to capitalize on the benefits of the oil industry's expanding presence in North Dakota. While this study validates many of Huber's core findings, it also seeks to test how the broader processes that Huber and other geographers of energy have elucidated, with the results of this testing summarized in the following subsection (7.3.2).

7.3.2 Connecting Local outcomes to extra-local processes

Within each of the three bodies of literature, most studies either focus on examining geopolitical issues or public opinion at the macro scale or on localized effects of extraction. However, the two approaches are seldom combined and insights from one approach are often not applied to the other. This dissertation addresses this issue by examining the role of ideology and both elite and formal discourses in informing debates about fracking in the Bakken, as well as in informing experiences with and opinions about development at the local level in Minot. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, while local case studies in both geographies of energy and in social studies of extraction more broadly often do well in exploring the relationships between development outcomes and local cultures, these studies often do not explain how the culture has evolved over time or the ways in which contemporary processes and events have altered a culture that is often assumed to be static.

This study specifically demonstrates the ways in which discourses introduced in chapters 4 and 5 have influenced the fracking debate in Minot and led to changes in Minot's local culture (chapter 6). Additionally, this dissertation has found that while local outcomes cannot be cast as mere variations of one-size-fits-all policy making and

application of economic logics, broader political economic trends were seen as the major causal factor as to the development of the Bakken from 2007-present. Indeed, respondents often cited how important they believed the Bakken to be in global geopolitics and how the Bakken downturn was largely the result not of local conditions, but of downturn's in the global oil market. Thus, this dissertation demonstrates the gains that can be made from integrating data gleaned from geopolitical studies of fracking with on the ground case studies, a model which several authors working in Australia (Mercer, de Rijke, & Dressler, 2014) and the Bakken (Caraher and Conway, 2016) have already attempted.

7.3.3 Connecting theory to fracking case studies

A model for integrating environmental subjectivities theories within ethnographic studies of energy and natural resources can be found in research on renewable energies (Jepson, Brannstrom, & Persons, 2012; Singh, 2013), traditional extractive industries (Abrahamson & Somerville, 2007; Quist & Rinne, 2017) and in neo-extractive contexts (Davidov, 2013; Holterman, 2014). However, with the exception of notable studies from the Marcellus Shale (Hudgins, 2013; Filteau, 2015) and Australia (Mercer, de Rijke, & Dressler, 2014), case studies of fracking have largely not engaged with literature on subjectivities. Many fracking studies are overly reliant on the boomtown sociology framework to the exclusion of other bodies of theory.

Much of the work in the boomtown sociology framework seeks to gauge how the existing cultural and economic milieus in new fracking landscapes is disrupted through the introduction of fracking and its attendant externalities. However, the major flaws of

studies employing this model are twofold: 1.) the specific cultures and livelihoods that are being disrupted are often not fully interrogated or explained by study authors; 2.) the same patterns of disruption are found in far different cultural and political contexts; and 3.) disruption is often not explicitly defined, thus it becomes a subjective judgment made by both researcher and respondent as to what it constitutes. Indeed, as mentioned in 2.3, the boomtown sociology framework appears to have a limiting effect on the type of questions that researchers are willing to ask, as they appear focused on trying to keep their studies within the boundaries of the framework, which was originally devised for examining traditional resource booms during the 1970s.

To remedy these issues, this dissertation specifically sought to critically examine and explain the particular cultural and economic cultures of Minot and to explain how disruption have been conditioned by that very culture, rather than viewing disruption as a type of endogenous shock to an unwitting community unprepared for negative externalities.[44] This study found that respondents were highly aware of the relationship between political and economic institutions in North Dakota and various Bakken cities. Respondents were able to easily articulate how the situation in Minot was different than that of neighboring Williston – or more broadly between the Bakken and other shale plays – and were able to connect these changes to specific cultural and policy differences between these locales. Thus, while research for this dissertation was not specifically designed to refute the conclusions of the boomtown sociology approach, data collected

[44] This type of argument is well represented by Schafft et al.'s (2014) study on the Marcellus and Theodori and Ellis' (2017) recent study on the Eagle Ford Shale, which both depicted rural political elites as unprepared for and overwhelmed by a host of entirely predictable externalities such as infrastructure, budgeting and crime that have been identified as hallmarks of boomtown development.

showed that the traditional boomtown model of coherent disruptions to a static community largely does not apply in Minot.

However, it is not just boomtown sociology studies that suffer from a lack of engagement with subjectivity theory. Many studies examining anti-fracking activism seek to define what specific grievances activists have with fracking and their motivations for becoming involved in activism (Kinchy, 2017; Haggerty & McBride, 2016). While authors often argue that such motivations are based on the supposed violation of individuals' safety and security, they do not make significant efforts to understand why specific individuals feel violated and how these feelings of violation differ from person-to-person, an area in which subjectivity theory could be a useful interpretive tool.[45] This issue is remedied by fracking case studies framed around trauma experienced by respondents (Perry, 2012; Davidson, 2017, among many others), which have used various theories of trauma from disciplines as varied as sociology and management studies in order to study the mental and emotional tolls of development. This dissertation builds on the models employed by these studies and extends them to the Bakken, finding that respondents' grievances are often a deeply personal matter related to their individual encounters and experiences with fracking-related development. Additionally, this dissertation has found that trauma for Minot respondents has been solely of the emotional kind, especially in relation to older respondents' views about the supposed collapse of Minot's traditional values system. Thus, this dissertation contributes to case studies of subjectivity in

[45] A notable exception to this is Willow and Keefer's (2015) study of activist women in Ohio, which is specifically informed by feminist conceptions of the subject.

fracking landscapes by moving beyond both the limiting boomtown sociology framework as well as building on existing studies focusing on trauma. This dissertation specifically integrates questions about moral values alongside traditional notions of disruption, a model which is already prevalent in case studies of renewable that specifically take subjectivity into consideration (Singh, 2013; Newberry, 2013).

7.4 Policy implications of research findings

In addition to the academic implications of this dissertation's findings, these findings also have the potential to influence policy decisions on the part of three separate stakeholder groups: 1.) Oil and gas elites (discussed in detail in Chapter 4); 2.) Ordinary, non-involved residents (discussed in detail in Chapter 6); and 3.) Residents engaged in activism against the oil and gas industry (a group only briefly discussed in section 3.6.1).

This research would be of interest to oil and gas elites due to the dissertation's findings about the validity of elite discursive strategies in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Specifically, these findings demonstrate the effectiveness of invoking the North Dakota Way in order to engender pro-oil sentiments among the North Dakota populace. This effectiveness can be seen in chapters 5 and 6, in which industry-specific talking points form the basis of much discussion and debate regarding the role of fracking and the industry in North Dakota. A specific example of the effectiveness of this elite rhetorical strategy can be found in chapter 6, in which residents are loathe to directly criticize the oil industry for negative externalities that have resulted from fracking-led development. Thus, such results would provide confirmation for elites that their strategy has proved successful.

Additionally, several elite interviewees expressed interest in seeing the results of this dissertation due to their desire to better understand the opinions of non-elite residents regarding the oil and gas industry. The findings of this dissertation (specifically those from chapter 6) provide a particular window into the mindset of such a group of residents in Minot, a key city for Bakken administration. Therefore, elites could use these findings in order to devise a new strategy to specifically appeal to these residents' concerns. This could be of particular benefit to local policy makers in Minot, due to the very specific grievances residents expressed regarding the ineffectiveness of the city government.

Dissertation findings will be of interest to ordinary residents (such as those interviewed for chapter 6) due to their providing a baseline of knowledge about the oil and gas boom and its relationship to the broader history of North Dakota and Minot specifically. These findings are one of the few existing resources which will allow readers to survey the opinions of a broad cross-section of local Bakken residents not directly involved in either the oil industry, regulation or government. Specifically, this compilation of findings will allow residents to gauge the opinions of their friends and neighbors regarding fracking-led development, with these findings being contextualized within the dissertation's broader findings regarding industry-led attempts to influence fracking discourse in North Dakota.

Additionally, these findings are useful to residents as they provide specific insight about how the oil and gas boom has directly impacted Minot, a city often left out of media coverage or discussions about the Bakken boom in favor of broader political coverage or coverage of cities more directly impacted by extraction such as Williston. Indeed, a common complaint among respondents was that they felt both local and national news

were not providing adequate coverage of the boom's impacts. This dissertation specifically catalogs discrete grievances that residents have with city government, thus these findings could be used by residents to appeal to the city government to implement positive changes.

Findings will be of interest to anti-fracking activist groups due to this dissertation having explored the rhetorical strategies employed by industry supporters and the effects that such approaches have had on influencing public opinion regarding fracking and the industry. In particular, the finding that elite-employed strategies have largely been successful (and conversely, that activist, anti-fracking discourses have largely been absent from debate) could provide activists with the motivation to create new strategies that work within the specific cultural framework present in North Dakota. Specifically, these dissertation findings demonstrate the hostility that many North Dakotans have towards environmentalist rhetoric, with fracking debates being chiefly focused on issues of private property and economic impacts.

7.5 Future research directions

While this study has contributed to studies of ideology and subjectivity, newspapers analysis and case studies of fracking landscapes, field research and data analysis has uncovered several unexpected directions that are worthy of future research. The three main areas where this future research could be concentrated are: 1.) case studies of knowledge and institutions in the Bakken; 2.) a stronger, more integrated use of theory to describe social ecological transformations in the Bakken and North Dakota at

large; 3.) an exploration of the gender dimensions of the oil boom; and 4.) the integration of GIS and large-n surveys alongside case study approaches.

This study sought to examine how discourses, ideologies and subjectivities are produced at the elite level and how these are employed by individuals of varying backgrounds and how they structure debates and experiences of the Bakken oil boom. However, a deeper understanding of the laws and institutions that underpin many of these debates would be an important step forward toward creating a fully-fledged analysis of the role of the state in governing knowledge production and dissemination. Building on emerging work on the role of elite knowledge in oil industry governance (Asdal, 2014; Smith & Smith, 2018; Cumbers, Mackinnon, & Chapman, 2003) and emerging legal geographies of shale gas (Turton, 2015a, b; Andrews & McCarthy, 2014), future work could examine legal and policy documents related to energy and natural resource governance at the state, county and municipal levels. This study would also uncover the overlapping network of think tanks, research centers and oil and gas media outlets that produced much of the elite-level information about fracking. Additionally, as a counterpoint to elite knowledge production, future research in this vein would seek to examine how residents opposed to the oil and gas industry – especially the Native American community that has been most directly impacted by production – gather, interpret and produce knowledge and how this knowledge is used to inform protest. This research, then, would also contribute directly to the activist framing (Simonelli, 2014; Pearson, 2013) that this dissertation explicitly neglected.

Despite attempting to explicitly examine subjectivity production and its relationship to understanding of localized extraction, this dissertation did not engage directly with

foundational work in environmental subjectivity (Luke, 1995; Agrawal, 2005; Robbins, 2007) or with the work of subjectivity theorists such as Michel Foucault, Judith Butler and Louis Althusser. Thus, future research on subjectivities in the Bakken would explicitly seek to apply existing theories of the subject in order to determine how they can be affirmed or challenged in the "real world." A model for such research can already be found in work on the role of the state and private sector in attempting to inculcate pro-environmental behavior on the part of citizens, which has posited that the public pursuit of socially-progressive goals is used as a pretext for furthering government authority and control (Dilley, 2015; Jones, Pykett & Whitehead, 2013; Paterson & Stripple, 2010). Building on these findings, this research would seek to examine the explicit policy goals of fostering environmental behavior change (which in the Bakken can be viewed as largely anti-environmental), moving beyond this dissertation's objective of solely determining how such ideology operates. This nexus of policy and ideology could also be further extended to determine the overall goals of the Bakken project beyond mere accumulation, such as its role as a broader-based strategy for rural development in North Dakota and its contribution to the purported revival of rural America (7.2.1), providing a connection with an emerging body of literature on rural metabolism (Serrano-Tovar & Giampietro, 2014; Ravera, et al., 2014).

Although this study examined North Dakota's history of engagement with the extractive industries, it did not engage in significant detail with the gender aspects of these phenomena. A gender analysis of ideology and subject formation in the Bakken could analyze the ways in which extraction is framed as a stereotypically masculine endeavor and the ways in which women and others viewed as feminine are marginalized by existing

discourse. Specifically, an analysis of the expected behavior of women under the North Dakota Way (and in North Dakota culture more broadly) could help to uncover how the oil and gas boom serves to reinforce (or less likely, subvert) gender roles in North Dakota society. A masculinist analysis of the North Dakota Way could also examine the role of the prairie toughness mythology in normalizing exploitation of women, the state's Native American population and manual laborers in pursuit of stability, consensus-based politics and economic growth, themes which would overlap with existing neo-extractivist literatures (Svampa, 2015; van Teijlingen, 2016) and literatures on the role of male and female bodies in extractive labor (Abrahamson and Somerville, 2007; Austin, 2018).

Finally, while this study was entirely qualitative, the application of mixed-methods to studies of fracking in the Bakken could help to uncover data that cannot be gleaned solely through ethnographic methods alone. A specific method to be employed would be a large-n telephone, internet and/or mail survey to gauge Bakken residents' opinions about and understandings of fracking and development. Although this dissertation has been critical of such studies conducted in other shale plays (Theodori, 2013; Jacquet, 2012) due to the limited nature of researchers' aims and possible issues with response bias, a carefully crafted survey attentive to place-specificity would be extraordinarily useful in gauging a baseline of opinion that could then be used to inform case study research. Additionally, using GIS analysis to uncover hidden economic and environmental spatial patterns related to fracking – an approach already employed by Meng (2017), Juliusson and Doherty (2017) and Murphy, Brannstrom and Fry (2017) – would be a helpful supplement to existing ethnographic methodologies and could also be used to help facilitate GIS-aided focus groups (Cope, McLafferty & Rhodes, 2011).

7.6 Summary

The US shale energy boom of the late 2000s and 2010s has brought both economic growth and negative externalities to communities undergoing extraction. While much literature in the social sciences has been devoted to fracking landscapes in areas such as Pennsylvania, Texas and the UK, North Dakota's Bakken Formation (the third largest shale play in the nation) has received comparatively little attention. Building on previous research on fracking landscapes – as well as geographies of energy and natural resources and case studies of environmental subjectivity in extractive zones – this dissertation has examined the discourses and ideology used to support and oppose fracking-led development in North Dakota. Employing a series of key actor interviews and focus groups, participant observation and qualitative newspaper analysis, this dissertation has found that fracking in North Dakota is framed as an extension of the state's traditional extractive and agro-industrial economies. Moreover, the arguments used to argue for and against fracking are largely derived from existing value systems which emphasize self-reliance, obedience to authority and self-sacrifice for the community good. Thus, the key finding from this dissertation is that respondents have viewed fracking more through its effect on society and culture, than through the more typical framings of economy and environment emphasized in existing case studies.

REFERENCES

Abrahamson, L., & Somerville, M. (2007). Changing storylines and masculine bodies in Australian coal mining organizations. *Nordic J. Masculinity Stud*, *2*, 52-69.

Adusah-Karikari, A. (2015). Black gold in Ghana: Changing livelihoods for women in communities affected by oil production. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *2*(1), 24-32.

Agrawal, A. (2005). *Environmentality: Technologies of government and the making of subjects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Aldrich, S., Walker, R., Simmons, C., Caldas, M., & Perz, S. (2012). Contentious land change in the Amazon's arc of deforestation. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *102*(1), 103-128.

Allan, C. (2009). *Bomb Canada and other unkind remarks in the American media.* Edmonton, AB: AU Press.

Altenbernd, K. (2015, January 31). Letter: Let's get serious about oil spills. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

American Automobile Association (2017). North Dakota average gas prices. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://gasprices.aaa.com/?state=ND

American Petroleum Institute (2012). API Response to NRDC/Oil Change International. *American Petroleum Institute*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://www.api.org/policy-and-issues/policy-items/keystone-xl/~/media/Files/Policy/Keystone-XL-Pipeline/Myth-versus-Reality-1-18-12.ashx

Amundson, B. (2014, February 21). Letter: Ask, think before signing Clean

Water, Wildlife and Parks Amendment. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Anderson, K. (2014, October 21). Letter: Measure 5 a tool to bring balance. *Fargo Forum.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Andrews, E., & McCarthy, J. (2014). Scale, shale, and the state: Political ecologies and legal geographies of shale gas development in Pennsylvania. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, *4*(1), 7-16.

Andrews, T., Elizalde, B., Le Billon, P., Oh, C. H., Reyes, D., & Thomson, I. (2017). The Rise in Conflict Associated with Mining Operations: What Lies Beneath? *Canadian International Resources and Development Institute (CIRDI), Vancouver, Canada*.

Archbold, C. A., Dahle, T., & Jordan, R. (2014). Policing "The Patch": Police response to rapid population growth in oil boomtowns in Western North Dakota. *Police Quarterly*, *17*(4), 386-413.

Armstrong, A., & Bulkeley, H. (2014). Micro-hydro politics: Producing and contesting community energy in the North of England. *Geoforum*, *56*, 66-76.

Arnold, G., & Holahan, R. (2014). The Federalism of Fracking: how the locus of policy-making authority affects civic engagement. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, *44*(2), 344-368.

Asdal, K. (2014). From climate issue to oil issue: offices of public administration, versions of economics, and the ordinary technologies of politics. *Environment and Planning A*, *46*(9), 2110-2124.

Ashmoore, O., Evensen, D., Clarke, C., Krakower, J., & Simon, J. (2016). Regional newspaper coverage of shale gas development across Ohio, New York, and

Pennsylvania: Similarities, differences, and lessons. *Energy Research & Social Science*, *11*, 119-132.

Associated Press. (2003, October 25). Split ruling in suit over Minot's sales-tax spending. *Bismarck Tribune*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://bismarcktribune.com

Austin, D.E. (2018). Doubly invisible: Women's labor in the US Gulf of Mexico offshore oil and gas industry. In Atabaki, T., Bini, E., & Ehsani, K. (Eds.), *Working for oil* (pp. 399-422). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Auty, R. M. (1995). Industrial policy, sectoral maturation, and postwar economic growth in Brazil: the resource curse thesis. *Economic Geography*, *71*(3), 257-272.

------. (Ed.). (2001). *Resource abundance and economic development*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Baka, J. (2017). Making space for energy: wasteland development, enclosures, and energy dispossessions. *Antipode*, *49*(4), 977-996.

Bakker, K. (2010). The limits of 'neoliberal natures': Debating green neoliberalism. *Progress in Human Geography*, *34*(6), 715-735.

Bakker, K., & Bridge, G. (2006). Material worlds? Resource geographies and the matter of nature'. *Progress in human geography*, *30*(1), 5-27.

Balgord, W.D. (2014, February 15). Letter: Who wins with oil on rails? *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Ballotpedia. (2018). North Dakota Clean Water, Wildlife, and Parks Amendment. *Ballotpedia*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://ballotpedia.org/North_Dakota_Clean_Water,_Wildlife_and_Parks_Amendment,_Measure_5_(2014).

Bansal, P., & Knox-Hayes, J. (2013). The time and space of materiality in organizations and the natural environment. *Organization & Environment*, *26*(1), 61-82.

Barr, S., & Pollard, J. (2017). Geographies of Transition: Narrating environmental activism in an age of climate change and 'Peak Oil'. *Environment and Planning A*, *49*(1), 47-64.

Barron-Lopez, L. (2014, November 18). Landrieu, Keystone pipeline fall one vote short in Senate drama. *The Hill*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/224616-keystone-defeated-in-senate

Bayode, O. J. A., & Adewunmi, E. A. (2011). Environmental implications of oil exploration and exploitation in the coastal region of Ondo State, Nigeria: A regional planning appraisal. *Journal of Geography and Regional Planning*, *4*(3), 110.

Bebbington, A., & Bebbington, D.H. (2011). An Andean avatar: Post-neoliberal and neoliberal strategies for securing the unobtainable. *New Political Economy*, *16*(1), 131-145.

Bebbington, A. J., & Bury, J. T. (2009). Institutional challenges for mining and sustainability in Peru. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *106*(41), 17296-17301.

Belter, W.R. (2014, September 29). Letter: 'No' vote on Measure 5 is best choice for ND. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Benson, M.H. (2010). Adaptive management approaches by resource management agencies in the United States: implications for energy development in the interior West. *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law*, *28*(1), 87-118.

Bettini, G., & Karaliotas, L. (2013). Exploring the limits of peak oil: Naturalising the political, de-politicising energy. *The geographical journal*, *179*(4), 331-341.

Bhatia, N., & Casper, M. (Eds.). (2013). *The Petropolis of tomorrow*. New York, NY: Actar Publishers.

Bishop, D. (2014, January 3). Letter: Pipeline over rail means loss of jobs. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Blair, B. D., Weible, C. M., Heikkila, T., & McCormack, L. (2015). Certainty and uncertainty in framing the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing in the Colorado News Media. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, *6*(3), 290-307.

Blommaert, J., & Bulcaen, C. (2000). Critical discourse analysis. *Annual review of Anthropology*, *29*(1), 447-466.

Bluemle, J. (2000). *The face of North Dakota*. Bismarck, ND: North Dakota Geological Survey.

Bomberg, E. (2017). Shale we drill? Discourse dynamics in UK fracking debates. *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, *19*(1), 72-88.

Borras Jr, S. M., Hall, R., Scoones, I., White, B., & Wolford, W. (2011). Towards a better understanding of global land grabbing: an editorial introduction. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, *38*(2), 209-216.

Bosco, F.J., & Herman, T. (2010). Focus groups as collaborative research performances. In Delyser, D., Herbert, S., Aitken, S., Crang, M., & McDowell, L. (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative geography* (pp. 193-207). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Boudet, H., Clarke, C., Bugden, D., Maibach, E., Roser-Renouf, C., & Leiserowitz, A. (2014). “Fracking” controversy and communication: Using national survey data to understand public perceptions of hydraulic fracturing. *Energy Policy*, *65*, 57-67.

Bouzarovski, S., & Herrero, S.T. (2017). The energy divide: Integrating energy transitions, regional inequalities and poverty trends in the European Union. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, *24*(1), 69-86.

Brandt, H. (2013, March 3). Pipeline won’t help prices. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotdailynews.com

Brannstrom, C., Jepson, W., & Persons, N. (2011). Social perspectives on wind-power development in West Texas. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 839-851.

Brasier, K. J., Filteau, M. R., McLaughlin, D. K., Jacquet, J., Stedman, R. C., Kelsey, T. W., & Goetz, S. J. (2011). Residents’ perceptions of community and environmental impacts from development of natural gas in the Marcellus shale: A comparison of Pennsylvania and New York cases. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, *26*(1), 32.

Brauhn, M.A. (2014, October 8). Letter: Measure 5 offers practical solution. *Fargo Forum.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Brenner, N., Peck, J., & Theodore, N. (2010). Variegated neoliberalization: geographies, modalities, pathways. *Global networks*, *10*(2), 182-222.

Bridge, G. (2002). Grounding globalization: The prospects and perils of linking economic processes of globalization to environmental outcomes. *Economic Geography*, *78*(3), 361-386.

------. (2004). Contested terrain: mining and the environment. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, *29*, 205-259.

------. (2008). Global production networks and the extractive sector: governing resource-based development. *Journal of Economic Geography*, *8*(3), 389-419.

------. (2009). Material worlds: Natural resources, resource geography and the material economy. *Geography Compass*, *3*(3), 1217-1244.

------. (2011). Resource geographies 1: Making carbon economies, old and new. *Progress in Human Geography*, *35*(6), 820-834.

Bridge, G., Bouzarovski, S., Bradshaw, M., & Eyre, N. (2013). Geographies of energy transition: Space, place and the low-carbon economy. *Energy Policy*, *53*, 331-340.

Briggle, A. (2015). *A field philosopher's guide to fracking: How one Texas town stood up to big oil and gas*. New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corp.

Brooks, S. (2014, April 26). Letter: Support the outdoors, but not the conservation amendment. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Brorby, T., & Trout, S.B. (Eds.) (2016). *Fracture: Essays, poems and stories on fracking in America*. North Liberty, IA: Ice Cube Press.

Bryan, K.J. (2014, October 4). Unusual alliance on oil spill cleanup near Tioga. *Bismarck Tribune*. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from http://bismarcktribune.com

Bumpus, A. G., & Liverman, D. M. (2008). Accumulation by decarbonization and the governance of carbon offsets. *Economic geography*, *84*(2), 127-155.

Burgum, J. (2014, November 1). Letter: Special interests aim to disrupt governance. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Business Roundtable (2013). How North Dakota's Economy Benefits from International Trade & Investment. *Business Roundtable*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://tradepartnership.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/BRT_TRADE_2015_NorthDakota.pdf

Cameron, E. (2015). *Far off Metal River: Inuit lands, settler stories, and the making of the contemporary Arctic*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Calzonetti, F.J., & Solomon, B. (Eds.). (1985). *Geographical Dimensions of Energy*. Dordrecht, N.L.: Springer Netherlands.

Caraher, W, & Conway, K. (Eds.). (2016). *The Bakken goes boom: Oil and the changing geographies of Western North Dakota*. Grand Forks, ND: The Digital Press @ The University of North Dakota.

Carlson, E.J. (2014a, September 30). Letter: Measure 5 sounds good for North Dakota but isn't. *Dickinson Press*. No longer available online.

------. (2014b, October 27). Letter: Reject DU's intentions to get hands on our money. *Fargo Forum.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Carter, A. V., & Eaton, E. M. (2016). Subnational responses to fracking in Canada: explaining Saskatchewan's "Wild West" regulatory approach. *Review of Policy Research*, *33*(4), 393-419.

Carter, A. V., Fraser, G. S., & Zalik, A. (2017). Environmental policy convergence in Canada's fossil fuel provinces? Regulatory streamlining, impediments, and drift. *Canadian Public Policy*, *43*(1), 61-76.

Carter, J. (2014, September 2013). Letter: Measuring the measures. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Caulton, D. R., Shepson, P. B., Santoro, R. L., Sparks, J. P., Howarth, R. W., Ingraffea, A. R., ... & Stirm, B. H. (2014). Toward a better understanding and quantification of methane emissions from shale gas development. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *111*(17), 6237-6242.

Cepek, M. L. (2011). Foucault in the forest: Questioning environmentality in Amazonia. *American Ethnologist*, *38*(3), 501-515.

Church, K. (2015, May 24). Obama giving the middle finger. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotdailynews.com

Chyle, J.T. (2014, January 10). Letter: Oil pipelines make no sense. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

City of Minot (2018). *GIS*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotnd.org/170/GIS

City-Data (2018). Crime rate in Minot (ND). *City Data*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://city-data.com/crime/crime-Minot-North-Dakota.html

Clarke, C. E., Bugden, D., Hart, P. S., Stedman, R. C., Jacquet, J. B., Evensen, D. T., & Boudet, H. S. (2016). How geographic distance and political ideology interact to influence public perception of unconventional oil/natural gas development. *Energy Policy*, *97*, 301-309.

Clarke, C. E., Hart, P. S., Schuldt, J. P., Evensen, D. T., Boudet, H. S., Jacquet, J. B., & Stedman, R. C. (2015). Public opinion on energy development: The interplay of issue framing, top-of-mind associations, and political ideology. *Energy Policy*, *81*, 131-140.

Coen, S. E., Oliffe, J. L., Johnson, J. L., & Kelly, M. T. (2013). Looking for Mr. PG: Masculinities and men's depression in a northern resource-based Canadian community. *Health & place*, *21*, 94-101.

Colell, A., & Neumann-Cosel, L. (2016). Berlin: Cooperative power and the transformation of citizens' roles in energy decision making. In Luque-Ayala, A., & Silver, J. (Eds.), *Energy, power, and protest on the urban grid* (pp. 135-154). London, UK: Routledge.

Colwell, J. (2014, March 2014). Letter: Out-of-staters push ND petition. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Cook, E. (1976). *Man, Energy, Society*. San Francisco, CA: W.H. Freeman & Co.

Cook, J. J. (2014). Who's regulating who? Analyzing fracking policy in Colorado, Wyoming, and Louisiana. *Environmental Practice*, *16*(2), 102-112.

------. (2015). Who's Pulling the Fracking Strings? Power, collaboration and Colorado fracking policy. *Environmental Policy and Governance*, *25*(6), 373-385.

Conway, C. (2016). Notes from the global hinterlands: What it feel like to be global in North Dakota. In Caraher, W, & Conway, K. (Eds.), *The Bakken goes boom: Oil*

and the changing geographies of Western North Dakota (pp. 31-50). Grand Forks, ND: The Digital Press @ The University of North Dakota.

Cope, M. A., McLafferty, S., & Rhoads, B. L. (2011). Farmer attitudes toward production of perennial energy grasses in east central Illinois: implications for community-based decision making. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 852-862.

Cotton, M., Rattle, I., & Van Alstine, J. (2014). Shale gas policy in the United Kingdom: An argumentative discourse analysis. *Energy Policy*, *73*, 427-438.

Cumbers, A., Mackinnon, D., & Chapman, K. (2003). Innovation, collaboration, and learning in regional clusters: a study of SMEs in the Aberdeen oil complex. *Environment and planning A*, *35*(9), 1689-1706.

Cunfer, G. (2001). The New Deal's land utilization program in the Great Plains. *Great Plains Quarterly*, 193-210.

Cuppini, N., Frapporti, M., & Pirone, M. (2015). Logistics struggles in the Po Valley region: Territorial transformations and processes of antagonistic subjectivation. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *114*(1), 119-134.

Cupples, J. (2011). Shifting networks of power in Nicaragua: relational materialisms in the consumption of privatized electricity. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 939-948.

Dallmann, W. K., Peskov, V., Murashko, O. A., & Khmeleva, E. (2011). Reindeer herders in the Timan-Pechora oil province of Northwest Russia: an assessment of interacting environmental, social, and legal challenges. *Polar Geography*, *34*(4), 229-247.

Davidov, V. (2013). Mining versus Oil Extraction: Divergent and Differentiated Environmental Subjectivities in “Post-Neoliberal” Ecuador. *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 18(3), 485-504.

Davidson, D. J. (2017). Evaluating the effects of living with contamination from the lens of trauma: a case study of fracking development in Alberta, Canada. *Environmental Sociology*, 1-14.

Davis, C. (2014). Substate federalism and fracking policies: does state regulatory authority trump local land use autonomy? *Environmental science & technology*, *48*(15), 8397-8403.

Davis, L.R. (2014, April 5). Letter: Bakken benefits move out. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Delanda, M. (2006). *A new philosophy of society: Assemblage theory and social complexity*. New York, NY: A&C Black.

Delshad, A., & Raymond, L. (2013). Media framing and public attitudes toward biofuels. *Review of Policy Research*, *30*(2), 190-210.

Dennis, T. (2014, April 23). Dennis: Keystone XL delays get embarrassing. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

de Rijke, K. (2013). The agri-gas fields of Australia: Black soil, food, and unconventional gas. *Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment*, *35*(1), 41-53.

Devine-Wright, P. (2009). Rethinking NIMBYism: The role of place attachment and place identity in explaining place-protective action. *Journal of community & applied social psychology*, *19*(6), 426-441.

Devine-Wright, P., & Howes, Y. (2010). Disruption to place attachment and the protection of restorative environments: A wind energy case study. *Journal of environmental psychology*, *30*(3), 271-280.

Dickinson Press Editorial Board. (2013, July 11). Other views: Pipelines remain safest Option. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Dickson, C. (1985). Minot history, 1920-1940. *Minot Public Library.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://www.minotlibrary.org/files/1613/8600/6616/minothistory-1920 1940.pdf

Dihle, D. (2014, October 8). Letter: Ag community opposes Measure 5. *Fargo Forum*. No longer available online.

Dilley, L. T. (2015). Governing our choices: 'proenvironmental behaviour' as a practice of government. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, *33*(2), 272-288.

DiMaggio, P., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Collective rationality and institutional isomorphism in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 147-160.

Dodge, J., & Lee, J. (2017). Framing dynamics and political gridlock: The curious case of hydraulic fracturing in New York. *Journal of environmental policy & planning*, *19*(1), 14-34.

Dokshin, F. A. (2016). Whose backyard and what's at issue? Spatial and ideological dynamics of local opposition to fracking in New York State, 2010 to 2013. *American Sociological Review*, *81*(5), 921-948.

Douglas, S., & Walker, A. (2017). Coal mining and the resource curse in the eastern United States. *Journal of Regional Science*, *57*(4), 568-590.

Dusyk, N. (2011). Downstream effects of a hybrid forum: the case of the Site C hydroelectric dam in British Columbia, Canada. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 873-881.

Edwards, R. (2015). *Natives of a dry place: Stories of Dakota before the oil boom*. Pierre, SD: South Dakota Historical Society Press.

Ehrlich, P. R., & Holdren, J. P. (1971). Impact of population growth. *Science*, *171*(3977), 1212-1217.

Ellis, C., Theodori, G. L., Petrzelka, P., Jackson-Smith, D., & Luloff, A. E. (2016). Unconventional risks: The experience of acute energy development in the Eagle Ford Shale. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 20, 91-98.

Ellsworth, W. L. (2013). Injection-induced earthquakes. *Science*, *341*(6142), 1225942.

Emel, J., & Peet, R. 1989. Resource management and natural hazards. In Peet, R., & Thrift, N. (Eds.), *New Models in Geography* (pp. 49-62). Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman.

England, J. L., & Albrecht, S. L. (1984). Boomtowns and social disruption. *Rural Sociology*, 49(2), 230.

England, K. V. (1994). Getting personal: Reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research. *The Professional Geographer*, *46*(1), 80-89.

Erikson, K. T. (1976). Loss of communality at Buffalo Creek. *The American journal of psychiatry, 133(3*), 302-305.

Evensen, D. T., Clarke, C. E., & Stedman, R. C. (2014). A New York or Pennsylvania state of mind: social representations in newspaper coverage of gas development in the Marcellus Shale. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, *4*(1), 65-77.

Evenson, C. (2014a, November 1). Letter: Save what's left of North Dakota. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved from http://inforum.com

------. (2014b, November 22). Letter: Keystone is a tar line, not oil line. *Fargo Forum.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2015a, February 28). Letter: Thank Obama for Keystone XL veto. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved from http://thedickinsonpress.com

------. (2015b, November 18). Letter: Thank Obama for denying Keystone XL. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2017 from http://inforum.com

Fairclough, N. (1993). Critical discourse analysis and the marketization of public discourse: The universities. *Discourse & Society*, *4*(2), 133-168.

------. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. London, UK: Routledge.

Fast, S., Mabee, W., Baxter, J., Christidis, T., Driver, L., Hill, S., ... & Tomkow, M. (2016). Lessons learned from Ontario wind energy disputes. *Nature Energy*, *1*(2), 15028.

Feininger, M. (2014, November 3). Letter: Measure 5 would ensure ND's way of life. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Fernando, F. N., & Cooley, D. R. (2016). An oil boom's effect on quality of life (QOL): Lessons from western North Dakota. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, *11*(4), 1083-1115.

------. (2016). Socioeconomic system of the oil boom and rural community development in western North Dakota. *Rural Sociology*, *81*(3), 407-444.

Filteau, M. R. (2015). Go back to Texas, gas bastards! How a newcomer population of itinerant energy workers manage dirty work stigma in the Marcellus shale region. *Society & natural resources*, *28*(11), 1153-1167.

Finewood, M. H., & Stroup, L. J. (2012). Fracking and the Neoliberalization of the Hydro-Social Cycle in Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale. *Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education*, *147*(1), 72-79.

Fischer, H. W., & Chhatre, A. (2013). Environmental citizenship, gender, and the emergence of a new conservation politics. *Geoforum*, *50*, 10-19.

Foley, P., Mather, C., & Neis, B. (2015). Governing enclosure for coastal communities: Social embeddedness in a Canadian shrimp fishery. *Marine Policy*, *61*, 390-400.

Forum News Service. (2012, July 16). Forum editorial: Oil money is buying something. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2013, February 12). Forum editorial: Keystone protesters ineffectual. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2014a, February 19). Forum editorial: Gouging or a free market? *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2014b, November 18). Forum editorial: Heitkamp tries to set right tone. *Fargo Forum.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Fox, J. (2014, August 7). Letter: Out-of-state interests lust after ND oil money. *Fargo Forum.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Frazier, H. (2014, October 1). Frazier: Measure 5 not what state needs. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Freudenburg, W. R. (1981). Women and men in an energy boomtown: adjustment, alienation, and adaptation. *Rural Sociology*, *46*(2), 220.

------. (1986). the density of acquaintanceship: an overlooked variable in community research? *American Journal of Sociology*, *92*(1), 27-63.

Fry, M. (2013). Urban gas drilling and distance ordinances in the Texas Barnett Shale. *Energy Policy*, *62*, 79-89.

Fry, M., Brannstrom, C., & Murphy, T. (2015). How Dallas became frack free: hydrocarbon governance under neoliberalism. *Environment and Planning A*, *47*(12), 2591-2608.

Fuglie, J. (2014a). Special places? It's all over except the drilling. *The Prairie Blog*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://theprairieblog.areavoices.com/2014/03/03/special-places-its-all-over-except-the-drilling/

------. (2014 b, May 14). Fuglie: Conservation amendment would benefit farmers. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Gaswirth, S. B., Marra, K. R., Cook, T. A., Charpentier, R. R., Gautier, D. L., Higley, D. K., ... & Tennyson, M. E. (2013). *Assessment of undiscovered oil resources in the Bakken and Three Forks Formations, Williston Basin Province, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota, 2013* (No. 2013-3013). US Geological Survey.

Gay, R. (2011, September 24). Pipeline would carry dirty oil. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Gee, J. P. (2014). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. Routledge.

------. (2017). *Introducing Discourse Analysis: From Grammar to Society*. Routledge.

Gilje, E., Ready, R., & Roussanov, N. (2016). *Fracking, drilling, and asset pricing: Estimating the economic benefits of the shale revolution* (No. w22914). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Gillette, J. M. (1940). Social-Economic Submergence in a Plains State. *Rural Sociology*, *5*(1), 59.

Gillon, S. (2010). Fields of dreams: negotiating an ethanol agenda in the Midwest United States. *The Journal of peasant studies*, *37*(4), 723-748.

Glass-Moore, A. (2016, December 29). Minneapolis paper mocks Fargo commissioner Piepkorn. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://meanread.com/ /2016/12/29/minneapolis-newspaper-makes-fun-of-fargo-commissioner-piepkorn/

Goldthau, A., & LaBelle, M. (2016). The power of policy regimes: explaining shale gas policy divergence in Bulgaria and Poland. *Review of Policy Research*, *33*(6), 603-622.

Godfread, J. (2014, April 18). Godfread: Amendment assumptions are fundamentally flawed. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Godfread, J., & Watne, M. (2014, Mar. 26). Godfread and Watne: Conservation amendment raises too many red flags. *The Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com.

Goetz, D. (2014, October 21). Letter: ND should not miss chance to protect natural heritage. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Grand Forks Herald Editorial Board. (2014, February 28). Other Views: Anti-Keystone XL activists squander public's trust. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

------. (2015, January 27). Other Views: Don't disparage pipeline construction jobs. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Gravelle, T. B., & Lachapelle, E. (2015). Politics, proximity and the pipeline: Mapping public attitudes toward Keystone XL. *Energy Policy*, *83*, 99-108.

Gustafson, R. (2014, November 23). Letter: Keystone benefits greatly overstated. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Haggerty, J. H. (2007). "I'm not a greenie but…": Environmentality, eco-populism and governance in New Zealand Experiences from the Southland whitebait fishery. *Journal of rural studies*, *23*(2), 222-237.

Haggerty, J.H., & McBride, K. (2016). Does local monitoring empower fracking host communities? A case study from the gas fields of Wyoming. *Journal of rural studies*, *43*, 235-247.

Haluza-Delay, R. (2012). Giving consent in the petrostate: Hegemony and Alberta oil sands. *Journal for Activist Science and Technology Education*, *4*(1).

Hardin, G. (1968). The Tragedy of the Commons'(1968) 162. *Science*, *1243*.

Harkness, J. S., Darrah, T. H., Warner, N. R., Whyte, C. J., Moore, M. T., Millot, R., ... & Vengosh, A. (2017). The geochemistry of naturally occurring methane and saline groundwater in an area of unconventional shale gas development. *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta*, *208*, 302-334.

Harrison, C., & Popke, J. (2011). “Because you got to have heat”: the networked assemblage of energy poverty in Eastern North Carolina. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 949-961.

Harry, J. C. (2001). Covering conflict: A structural-pluralist analysis of how a small-town and a big-city newspaper reported an environmental controversy. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *78*(3), 419-436.

Hedstrup, P. (2012, February 3). Letter: Many questions surround Keystone XL pipeline. *Dickinson Press*. http://thedickinsonpress.com

Hein, K. A., & Funyufunyu, T. A. (2014). Artisanal mining in Burkina Faso: a historical overview of iron ore extraction, processing and production in the Dem region. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *1*(2), 260-272.

Heiser, J.A. (2014, November 1). Letter: The destruction continues in west. *Fargo Forum.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Heitkamp, H. (2012, January 21). Obama made wrong call on Keystone. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2018). Biography. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://heitkamp.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/biography.

Herald News Service (2010, September 1). Berg kicks off “North Dakota Way” tour. *Grand Forks Herald*. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from http://grandforksherald.com/

Hickman, M. (2015, November 7). Dialogues: Pro-pipeline movement never managed to articulate an either/or. *Williston Herald*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://willistonherald.com

Hodor, N.M., & Bangsund, D.A. (2013). Population estimates for City of Williston. *North Dakota State University Agribusiness and Applied Economics*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://www.cityofwilliston.com/document_center

Hoeven, J. (2012, February 7). Letter: Keystone in best interest of North Dakota and nation. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

------. (2015, March 4). Hoeven: Keystone XL about energy, jobs, economic growth and energy security. *Dickinson Press*. http://thedickinsonpress.com

Hogue, D. (2014, October 26). Measure 4 no 'power grab.' *Minot Daily News.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotdailynews.com

Holterman, D. (2014). The biopolitical war for life: extractivism and the Ugandan oil state. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *1*(1), 28-37.

Horowitz, L. S. (2010). "Twenty years is yesterday": Science, multinational mining, and the political ecology of trust in New Caledonia. *Geoforum*, *41*(4), 617-626.

Hough, B.J. (2015). *A Comparative Discourse Analysis of Media Texts Pertaining to Fracking in North Dakota's Bakken Region* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND.

Howarth, R. W. (2014). A bridge to nowhere: methane emissions and the greenhouse gas footprint of natural gas. *Energy Science & Engineering*, *2*(2), 47-60.

Howarth, R. W., Ingraffea, A., & Engelder, T. (2011). Natural gas: Should fracking stop? *Nature*, *477*(7364), 271.

Howarth, R. W., Santoro, R., & Ingraffea, A. (2011). Methane and the greenhouse-gas footprint of natural gas from shale formations. *Climatic Change*, *106*(4), 679.

Hu, X., & Hassink, R. (2017). Place leadership with Chinese characteristics? A case study of the Zaozhuang coal-mining region in transition. *Regional Studies*, *51*(2), 224-234.

Huber, M.T. (2013). *Lifeblood: Oil, freedom and the forces of capital*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Hudgins, A. (2013). Fracking's future in a coal mining past: subjectivity undermined. *Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment*, *35*(1), 54-59.

Hudgins, A., & Poole, A. (2014). Framing fracking: private property, common resources, and regimes of governance. *Journal of Political Ecology*, *21*(1), 303-319.

Hulse, D. (2011, September 3). Pipeline will carry world's dirtiest oil through our state. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2012, March 9). Keystone jobs claim disproved. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2013a, February 26). Letter: Pipeline editorial misleads. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2015, March 15). Letter: Dig a bit deeper to unearth what's at play with pipeline. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Ince, A., Featherstone, D., Cumbers, A., MacKinnon, D., & Strauss, K. (2015). British jobs for British workers? Negotiating work, nation, and globalisation through the Lindsey Oil Refinery disputes. *Antipode*, *47*(1), 139-157.

Jackson, R. B., Vengosh, A., Darrah, T. H., Warner, N. R., Down, A., Poreda, R. J., ... & Karr, J. D. (2013). Increased stray gas abundance in a subset of drinking water

wells near Marcellus shale gas extraction. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *110*(28), 11250-11255.

Jacobson, A. (2014, October 15). Letter: Ag community opposes Measure 5. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Jacquet, J. B. (2012). Landowner attitudes toward natural gas and wind farm development in northern Pennsylvania. *Energy Policy*, *50*, 677-688.

Jacquet, J., & Stedman, R. C. (2011). Natural gas landowner coalitions in New York State: emerging benefits of collective natural resource management. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, *26*(1), 62.

------. (2013). Perceived impacts from wind farm and natural gas development in northern Pennsylvania. *Rural Sociology*, *78*(4), 450-472.

Jalbert, K., Kinchy, A. J., & Perry, S. L. (2014). Civil society research and Marcellus Shale natural gas development: results of a survey of volunteer water monitoring organizations. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, *4*(1), 78-86.

Jaspal, R., & Nerlich, B. (2014). Fracking in the UK press: Threat dynamics in an unfolding debate. *Public Understanding of Science*, *23*(3), 348-363.

Jaspal, R., Nerlich, B., & Lemańcyzk, S. (2014). Fracking in the Polish press: Geopolitics and national identity. *Energy Policy,* 74, 253-261.

Jenkins, J., Boone, K., Bosworth, K., Lehman, J., & Loder, T. (2015). Boom and bust methodology: Opportunities and challenges with conducting research at sites of resource extraction. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *2*(4), 680-682.

Jenkins, K. (2015). Unearthing Women's Anti-Mining Activism in the Andes: Pachamama and the “Mad Old Women”. *Antipode*, *47*(2), 442-460.

Jensen-Ryan, D. (2014). New technologies. old stories: The forgotten voices of uranium mining in rural Wyoming. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *1*(2), 321-328.

Jepson, W., Brannstrom, C., & Persons, N. (2012). “We Don’t Take the Pledge”: Environmentality and environmental skepticism at the epicenter of US wind energy development. *Geoforum*, *43*(4), 851-863.

Jobes, P. C. (1987). The disintegration of gemeinschaft social structure from energy development: Observations from ranch communities in the western United States. *Journal of Rural Studies*, *3*(3), 219-229.

Johnson, A. (2016, December 10). School bond issue. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved from http://minotdailynews.com

------. (2017, August 29). Minot Public Schools enrollment numbers are steady. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved from http://minotdailynews.com

Johnson, J. (2011, October 18). Political scams already starting. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Johnson-Bailey, J. (1999). The ties that bind and the shackles that separate: Race, gender, class, and color in a research process. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *12*(6), 659-670.

Jones, R., Pykett, J., & Whitehead, M. (2013). *Changing behaviours: On the rise of the psychological state*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Juliusson, L. M., & Doherty, K. E. (2017). Oil and gas development exposure and conservation scenarios for Greater sage-grouse: Combining spatially explicit modeling with GIS visualization provides critical information for management decisions. *Applied geography*, *80*, 98-111.

Junod, A. N., Jacquet, J. B., Fernando, F., & Flage, L. (2018). Life in the Goldilocks Zone: Perceptions of Place Disruption on the Periphery of the Bakken Shale. *Society & Natural Resources*, *31*(2), 200-217.

Kalk, B. (2014, February 15). Kalk: Oil pipeline inspection and safety – a new approach. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Kaup, B. Z. (2010). A neoliberal nationalization? The constraints on natural-gas-led development in Bolivia. *Latin American Perspectives*, *37*(3), 123-138.

Kaldor, D. (2014, March 5). Letter: Carpetbaggers should be routed. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Kedron, P., & Bagchi-Sen, S. (2011). A study of the emerging renewable energy sector within Iowa. *Annals of the association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 882-896.

Kenner, R. (2014, October 18). Letter: Measure 5 not right way to go about conservation spending. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Keranen, K. M., Weingarten, M., Abers, G. A., Bekins, B. A., & Ge, S. (2014). Sharp increase in central Oklahoma seismicity since 2008 induced by massive wastewater injection. *Science*, *345*(6195), 448-451.

Kinchy, A. (2017). Citizen science and democracy: participatory water monitoring in the Marcellus shale fracking boom. *Science as Culture*, *26*(1), 88-110.

Kinchy, A., Jalbert, K., & Lyons, J. (2014). What is volunteer water monitoring good for? Fracking and the plural logics of participatory science. In *Fields of Knowledge: Science, Politics and Publics in the Neoliberal Age* (pp. 259-289). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Kohl, B., & Farthing, L. (2012). Material constraints to popular imaginaries: The extractive economy and resource nationalism in Bolivia. *Political Geography*, *31*(4), 225-235.

Kowalsky, N., & Haluza-DeLay, R. (2013). Homo energeticus: Technological rationality in the Alberta tar sands. In *Jacques Ellul and the technological society in the 21st century* (pp. 159-175). Amsterdam: Springer Netherlands.

Kroepsch, A. (2016). New rig on the block: spatial policy discourse and the new suburban geography of energy production on Colorado's Front Range. *Environmental Communication*, *10*(3), 337-351.

Kuby, M., He, C., Trapido-Lurie, B., & Moore, N. (2011). The changing structure of energy supply, demand, and CO2 emissions in China. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 795-805.

Kutka, F. (2014, September 30). . Letter: Measure 5 would help us share heritage with future generations. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Laplonge, D., & Albury, K. (2013). Doing safer masculinities: addressing at-risk gendered behaviours on mine sites. *M/C Journal*, *16*(2).

Ladd, A. E. (2013). Stakeholder perceptions of socioenvironmental impacts from unconventional natural gas development and hydraulic fracturing in the Haynesville Shale. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences, 28*(2), 56.

LaDuke, W. (2013a, January 26). Letter: Sen. Heitkamp endorses environmental disaster. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2013b, June 8). Letter: Pipeline as life saver is pipe dream. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2014, September 22). Letter: A snake hears a song. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Larsen, L. (2014, March 14). Letter: Nothing sound about Keystone. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2015a, January 10). Letter: Senators wrong on Keystone. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Laurier, E. (2010). Participant observation. In Clifford, N., French, S., & Valentine, G. (Eds.), *Key methods in geography* (pp.116-130). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Le Billon, P., & Cervantes, A. (2009). Oil prices, scarcity, and geographies of war. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *99*(5), 836-844.

LeClerc, E., & Keeling, A. (2015). From cutlines to traplines: Post-industrial land use at the Pine Point mine. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *2*(1), 7-18.

LeSueur, M. (1955). *Crusaders: The radical legacy of Marian and Arthur LeSueur*. New York, NY: Blue Heron Press.

Liesch, M. (2014). Spatial boundaries and industrial landscapes at Keweenaw National Historical Park. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *1*(2), 303-311.

Llewellyn, D. H., Rohse, M., Day, R., & Fyfe, H. (2017). Evolving energy landscapes in the South Wales Valleys: Exploring community perception and participation. *Energy Policy*, *108*, 818-828.

Loder, J.A. (1985). 'Le Sewer' socialism: A study of socialism in the railroad boomtown of Minot, North Dakota, 1909-1914" (Unpublished senior thesis). Macalester College, Saint Paul, MN.

Loder, T. (2016a). Spaces of consent and the making of fracking subjects in North Dakota: a view from two corporate community forums. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *3*(3), 736-743.

------. (2016b). Reflections on Activist v. Industry Education Conferences in North Dakota's Bakken Shale. *Practicing Anthropology*, *38*(3), 34-36.

Lord, A. (2014). Making a 'hydropower nation': subjectivity, mobility, and work in the Nepalese hydroscape. *HIMALAYA, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies*, *34*

Luke, T. W. (1995). On environmentality: Geo-power and eco-knowledge in the discourses of contemporary environmentalism. *Cultural Critique*, (31), 57-81.

Mackey, T. (2012, March 2). Guest column: Pipeline is jobs for ND. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from htto://inforum.com

Malin, S. (2014). There's no real choice but to sign: neoliberalization and normalization of hydraulic fracturing on Pennsylvania farmland. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, *4*(1), 17-27.

Marek, G. (2014, September 12). Letter: Millions of dollars on recreation isn't common Sense. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Markay, L (2011, September 1). Valero hits back at 'misleading' report on Keystone Pipeline. *Daily Signal*. https://www.dailysignal.com/2011/09/01/valero-hits-back at-misleading-report-on-keystone-pipeline/

Mason, A. (2013). The Homo Energeticus: maturity, inheritance, identity. *Environmental Research Letters*, *8*(1), DOI: 014031.

Mather, C. (2013). From cod to shellfish and back again? The new resource geography and Newfoundland's fish economy. *Applied Geography*, *45*, 402-409.

May, C. (2011, December 2). The case for Keystone XL pipeline, other oil sources. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Mazur, A. (2016). How did the fracking controversy emerge in the period 2010-2012? *Public Understanding of Science*, *25*(2), 207-222.

McAllister, M. L., Fitzpatrick, P., & Fonseca, A. (2014). Challenges of space and place for corporate 'citizens' and healthy mining communities: the case of Logan Lake, BC and Highland Valley Copper. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *1*(2), 312-320.

McCarthy, J. (2002). First World political ecology: lessons from the Wise Use movement. *Environment and planning A*, *34*(7), 1281-1302.

McDonell, E. (2015). The co-constitution of neoliberalism, extractive industries, and indigeneity: Anti-mining protests in Puno, Peru. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *2*(1), 112-123.

McDowell, L. (2010). Interviewing: Fear and liking in the field. In Delyser, D., Herbert, S., Aitken, S., Crang, M., & McDowell, L. (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative geography* (pp. 156-171). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McGarr, A., Bekins, B., Burkardt, N., Dewey, J., Earle, P., Ellsworth, W., ... & Rubinstein, J. (2015). Coping with earthquakes induced by fluid injection. *Science*, *347*(6224), 830-831.

McHenry, K. A. (2017). Fracking Women: A Feminist Critical Analysis of Hydraulic Fracturing in Pennsylvania. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*, *10*(2), 79-104.

Meng, Q. (2017). The impacts of fracking on the environment: a total environmental study paradigm. *Science of the Total Environment*, *580*, 953-957.

Mercer, A., de Rijke, K., & Dressler, W. (2014). Silences in the midst of the boom: coal seam gas, neoliberalizing discourse, and the future of regional Australia. *Journal of Political Ecology*, *21*(1), 279-302.

Metze, T. (2017). Fracking the debate: Frame shifts and boundary work in Dutch decision making on shale gas. *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, *19*(1), 35-52.

------. (2017). Fracking the debate: Frame shifts and boundary work in Dutch decision making on shale gas. *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, *19*(1), 35-52.

Meyer, R. (2013, March 2). Letter: Pipeline was not 'shovel ready'. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved from http://inforum.com

Minot Area Chamber of Commerce (2017, December). Minot, ND and Ward County economy at a glance. *Minot Area Chamber of Commerce*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://www.minotchamber.org/uploads/24

Minot Daily News Editorial Board. (2013, January 25). Obama is out of excuses. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotdailynews.com

------. (2014a, May 8). Taking a big step backward. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved from http://minotdailynews.com

------. (2014b, July 27). Energy independence needed now. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2017 from http://minotdailynews.com

------. (2014c, November 22). Make Keystone a reality. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2017 from http://minotdailynews.com

Minot Junior Chamber of Commerce (1961). *Why Minot?* Minot, ND: R-L-M Printing Co.

Moen, J. (2012, Jun 15). Big oil pushes for Keystone XL. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Moen, S. (2014, September 29). Letter: Measure 5 will earmark billions of dollars for special interests. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Monke, D. (2016, July 1). Exec: Davis Refinery not affected by Dakota Prairie Refinery sale. *Bismarck Tribune*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://bismarcktribune.com

Monson, D. (2014, March 25). Letter: Conservation amendment a positive for farmers. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Moore, T. (2014, October 15). Letter: Roosevelt would have supported Measure 5. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedicksinsonpress.com

Moss, J. (Producer & Director). (2014). *The overnighters* [Motion Picture]. United States: Drafthouse Films.

Ms. C. (2016, October 30). Let's talk about the "North Dakota Way." *The New Forty.* Retrieved April 7, 2018 from https://thenewforty.areavoices.com/2016/10/30/lets-talk-about-the-north-dakota-way

Mulvaney, D. (2017). Identifying the roots of Green Civil War over utility-scale solar energy projects on public lands across the American Southwest. *Journal of Land Use Science*, *12*(6), 493-515.

Murphy, T., Brannstrom, C., & Fry, M. (2017). Ownership and Spatial Distribution of Eagle Ford Mineral Wealth in Live Oak County, Texas. *The Professional Geographer*, *69*(4), 616-628.

Murphy, T., Brannstrom, C., Fry, M., & Ewers, M. (2018). Economic-Development Stakeholder Perspectives on Boomtown Dynamics in the Eagle Ford Shale, Texas. *Geographical Review*, *108*(1), 24-44.

Myerchin, P. (2014, September 20). Vote 'yes' on Measure 5. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotdailynews.com

------. (2014, October 29). Letter: Do you believe neighbors or out-of-state oil lobby? *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

National Research Damage Assessment and Research Program (2018). Enbridge Energy Pipeline (MI). Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https:// cerc.usgs.gov/orda_docs/CaseDetails?ID=1054

Nelson, C. (2012, January 27). Heitkamp wrong about Keystone. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Nelson, E. (2014, October 22). Letter: Unanimous 'yes' for Measure 5. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Newberry, D. (2014). Why are there cattle in the conservation area? Social barriers to biofuel governance in Brazil. *Geoforum*, *54*, 306-314.

Norris, K. (1993). *Dakota: A spiritual geography*. New York, NY: Ticknor & Fields.

North Dakota Department of Health (2018). Oilfield environmental incidents. *North Dakota Department of Health*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://ndhealth.gov/ehs/foia/spills/defaultOGNotContained.aspx

North Dakota GIS (2018). GIS hub explorer map. *North Dakota GIS*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://gishubdata.nd.gov/dataset/gis-hub-explorer-map

North Dakota Legislative Branch. (2018). Corporate or limited liability company farming. *North Dakota Century Code*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://legis.nd.gov/cencode/t10c06-1.pdf

North Dakota Wheat Commission. (2018). N.D. historical wheat production. *North Dakota Wheat Commission*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://www.ndwheat.com/uploads/resources/548/ndhistwhtacreshrs.pdf

Nowatzki, M. (2014, October 21). Measure 4 aims to limit initiated ballot measures. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Obeng-Odoom, F. (2014). Oil, sex, and temporary migration: The case of Vienna City, Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *1*(1), 69-74.

O'Connor, C. D. (2017). Oil, crime, and disorder: A methodological examination of the oil boom's impact in North Dakota. *Deviant behavior*, *38*(4), 477-491.

Odermann, J. (2014, April 12). Odermann: Farmers and ranchers: The first conservationists. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Oil Change International (2011). Exporting energy security: Keystone XL exposed. *Oil Change International*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://priceofoil.org/content/uploads/2011/09/OCIkeystoneXL_2011R.pdf

Olson, P. A. (1981). The epic and Great Plains literature: Rølvaag, Cather, and Neihardt. *Prairie Schooner*, *55*(1/2), 263-285.

Olive, A. (2016). What is the fracking story in Canada? *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe Canadien*, *60*(1), 32-45.

Oliver, D. G., Serovich, J. M., & Mason, T. L. (2005). Constraints and opportunities with interview transcription: Towards reflection in qualitative research. *Social forces*, *84*(2), 1273-1289.

Omdahl, L. (2014, May 25). Omdahl: Some arguments favor the conservation Amendment. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Oppegard, H. (2014, October 9). Letter: They now notice support for No. 5. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

O'Riordan, T. (1976). *Environmentalism*. London, UK: Pion Limited.

Osborn, S. G., Vengosh, A., Warner, N. R., & Jackson, R. B. (2011). Methane contamination of drinking water accompanying gas-well drilling and hydraulic fracturing. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *108*(20), 8172-8176.

Osofsky, H. M., & Wiseman, H. J. (2014). Hybrid Energy Governance. *U. Ill. L. Rev.*, 1.

Oversen, K. (2013, May 25). Letter: Irresponsible GOP disserved ND oil country. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com/

Ottinger, G. (2010). Buckets of resistance: Standards and the effectiveness of citizen science. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, *35*(2), 244-270.

Parilla, J. (2017, March 30). How US states rely on the NAFTA supply chain. *Brookings Institution*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2017/03/30/how-u-s-states-rely-on-the-nafta-supply-chain/

Pasqualetti, M. J. (2011). Opposing wind energy landscapes: a search for common cause. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 907-917.

Paterson, M., & Stripple, J. (2010). My Space: governing individuals' carbon emissions. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *28*(2), 341-362.

Pearson, T. W. (2013). Frac sand mining in Wisconsin: Understanding emerging conflicts and community organizing. *Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment*, *35*(1), 30-40.

Pellegrini, L., & Arismendi, M. O. R. (2012). Consultation, Compensation and Extraction in Bolivia after the 'Left Turn': The Case of Oil Exploration in the North of La Paz Department. *Journal of Latin American Geography*, *11*(2), 103-120.

Perry, S. L. (2011, June). Energy consequences and conflicts across the global countryside: North American agricultural perspectives. In *Forum on Public Policy* (Vol. 2, pp. 1-23).

------. (2012). Development, land use, and collective trauma: the Marcellus Shale gas boom in rural Pennsylvania. *Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment*, *34*(1), 81-92.

Peters, L.W. (2014). *Fractured land: The price of inheriting oil*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press.

Petrova, S., Gentile, M., Mäkinen, I. H., & Bouzarovski, S. (2013). Perceptions of thermal comfort and housing quality: exploring the microgeographies of energy poverty in Stakhanov, Ukraine. *Environment and Planning A*, *45*(5), 1240-1257.

Phillips, A. T. (2014). Eliding extraction, embracing novelty: The spatio-temporal configuration of natural history. *Environmental Communication*, *8*(4), 452-467.

Plumer, G. (2014, January 8). U.S. oil exports have been banned for 40 years. Is it time for that to change? *Washington Post*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from

https://washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/01/08/u-s-oil-exports-have-been-banned-for-40-years-is-it-time-for-that-to-change/?utm_term=.e8131e42be27

Ports-to-Plains Alliance. (2018). Home. Retrieved from http://portstoplains.com/

Potter, T. (2012, January 21). Letter: Capture ND crude before transporting it from Canada via Keystone. *Dickinson Press.* http://thedickinsonpress.com

Poulsen, M. N., Bailey-Davis, L., DeWalle, J., Mowery, J., & Schwartz, B. S. Agricultural Implications of Unconventional Natural Gas Development: Divergent Perceptions of Sustainable and Conventional Farmers. *Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment, https://doi.org/10.1111/cuag.12104*.

Pratt, W. C. (1988). Socialism on the Northern Plains, 1900-1924. *South Dakota History*, *18*(7), 11.

Putnam, J. (1956). The role of the NDSP in North Dakota history. *North Dakota Quarterly, 24(4)*, 115-122.

Quist, L. M., & Rinne, P. (2017). The Politics of Justification: Newspaper Representations of Environmental Conflict between Fishers and the Oil Industry in Mexico. *Environmental Values*, *26*(4), 457-479.

Quist, P. (2014, October 26). Help stop Measure 5 at ballot box. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotdailynews.com

Rabe, B. G. (2014). Shale play politics: The intergovernmental odyssey of American shale governance. *Environmental science & technology*, *48*(15), 8369-8375.

Rabe, B. G., & Borick, C. (2013). Conventional politics for unconventional drilling? Lessons from Pennsylvania's early move into fracking policy development. *Review of Policy Research*, *30*(3), 321-340.

Rabe, B. G., & Hampton, R. L. (2015). Taxing fracking: The politics of state severance taxes in the shale era. *Review of Policy Research*, *32*(4), 389-412.

Raimi, D., & Newell, R. G. (2016). Local fiscal effects of oil and gas development in eight states. *Duke University Energy Initiative*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://energy.duke.edu

Rattray, T. (2015, July 24). Low Canadian dollar affects North Dakota businesses. *Regina Leader-Post*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://leaderpost.com

Ravera, F., Scheidel, A., Dell'Angelo, J., Gamboa, G., Serrano, T., Mingorría, S., ... & Ariza, P. (2014). Pathways of rural change: An integrated assessment of metabolic patterns in emerging ruralities. *Environment, development and sustainability*, *16*(4), 811-820.

Reed, A. (2016). *Unpacking boomtown tropes: Insider/outside dynamics in North Dakota's oil* patch. In Caraher, W, & Conway, K. (Eds.), *The Bakken goes boom: Oil and the changing geographies of Western North Dakota* (pp. 51-70). Grand Forks, ND: The Digital Press @ The University of North Dakota.

Reeves, M. (2011, September 18). Letter: Keystone XL pipeline to be great benefit. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Reuters. (2008). McCain blasts Russia in debate as KGB-run. *Reuters*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://reuters.com/article/us-usa-politics-debate-russia/mccain-blasts-russia-in-debate-as-kgb-run-idUSTRE48Q0SB20080927

Richardson, D. (2015, February 21). Letter: Stop lying about Keystone pipeline. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Richardson, J. (2011, December 17). Pipeline's job claims inflated. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

------. (2012a, January 17). Letter: Verification needed regarding Sen. John Hoeven's push for Keystone XL. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

------. (2012b, April 3). Forum editorial perpetuates myth pipeline will benefit oil patch. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Rinfret, S., Cook, J. J., & Pautz, M. C. (2014). Understanding state rulemaking processes: Developing fracking rules in Colorado, New York, and Ohio. *Review of Policy Research*, *31*(2), 88-104.

Ringelman, J. (2014, October 22). Letter: What does conservation cost? *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2017 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Robbins, P. (2007). *Lawn people: How grasses, weeds, and chemicals make us who we are*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Robinson, E.B. (1966). *History of North Dakota*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Ruckert, A., Macdonald, L., & Proulx, K. R. (2017). Post-neoliberalism in Latin America: a conceptual review. *Third World Quarterly*, *38*(7), 1583-1602.

Schafer, J. (2014, October 17). Letter: Measure 5 would allocate too much money to special interests. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedicksinsonpress.com

Schafft, K. A., Glenna, L. L., Green, B., & Borlu, Y. (2014). Local impacts of unconventional gas development within Pennsylvania's Marcellus shale region: Gauging boomtown development through the perspectives of educational administrators. *Society & Natural Resources*, *27*(4), 389-404.

Scheyder, E. (2016, June 28). Newest U.S. refinery sold at a loss, hurt by oil price slump. *Reuters*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://reuters.com/article/us-north-dakota-refinery/newest-u-s-refinery-sold-at-a-loss-hurt-by-oil-price-slump-idUSKCN0ZF03K

Schlosser, K. (2013). Regimes of ethical value? Landscape, race and representation in the Canadian diamond industry. *Antipode*, *45*(1), 161-179.

Schoenberger, E. (1991). The corporate interview as a research method in economic geography. *The Professional Geographer*, *43*(2), 180-189.

Schramm, J. (2017, December 2). Crime wave. *Minot Daily News*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://minotdailynews.com

Serrano-Tovar, T., & Giampietro, M. (2014). Multi-scale integrated analysis of rural Laos: Studying metabolic patterns of land uses across different levels and scales. *Land use policy*, *36*, 155-170.

Sheppard, E. (2008). Geographic dialectics? *Environment and Planning A*, *40*(11), 2603-2612.

Sherman, J. (2012, January 28). Forum editorial perfectly wrong about president's call on pipeline. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Short, D., & Szolucha, A. (2017). Fracking Lancashire: the planning process, social harm and collective trauma. *Geoforum*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.03.001

Silva, T. J., & Crowe, J. A. (2015). The hope-reality gap: rural community officials' perceptions of unconventional shale development as a means to increase local population and revitalize resource extraction. *Community Development*, *46*(4), 312-328.

Silver, J. J. (2014). From fishing to farming: Shellfish aquaculture expansion and the complexities of ocean space on Canada's west coast. *Applied Geography*, *54*, 110-117.

Simonelli, J. (2014). Home rule and natural gas development in New York: civil fracking rights. *Journal of Political Ecology*, *21*(1), 258-78.

Sing, J. (2015). Regulating mining resource investments towards sustainable development: the case of Papua New Guinea. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 2(1), 124-131.

Singh, N. M. (2013). The affective labor of growing forests and the becoming of environmental subjects: Rethinking environmentality in Odisha, India. *Geoforum*, *47*, 189-198.

Smil, V. (2011). America's oil imports: A self-inflicted burden. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 712-716.

Smith, A., Hargreaves, T., Hielscher, S., Martiskainen, M., & Seyfang, G. (2016). Making the most of community energies: Three perspectives on grassroots innovation. *Environment and Planning A*, *48*(2), 407-432.

Smith, J. M., & Smith, N. M. (2018). Engineering and the Politics of Commensuration in the Mining and Petroleum Industries. *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society*, *4*, 67-84.

Smith, M. F., & Ferguson, D. P. (2013). “Fracking democracy”: Issue management and locus of policy decision-making in the Marcellus Shale gas drilling debate. *Public Relations Review*, *39*(4), 377-386.

Smith, R.S. (2014, October 11). Letter: Conservation amendment would benefit farmers. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2017 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Spiess, J. (2014, July 20). *Montana made, Bakken Strong*. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from http://buildingthebakken.com/montana-made-bakken-strong-2/

Stempel, G. H. (1952). Sample size for classifying subject matter in dailies. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *29*(3), 333.

Stephenson, E., Doukas, A., & Shaw, K. (2012). Greenwashing gas: Might a ‘transition fuel label legitimize carbon-intensive natural gas development? *Energy Policy*, *46*, 452-459.

Stites, G. (2013, April 24). Politicians who back Keystone XL, ignore ONEOK pipeline owe explanation. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

------. (2015, February 18). Letter: Pipeline politics carry the day. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Svampa, M. (2015). Commodities consensus: Neoextractivism and enclosure of the commons in Latin America. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *114*(1), 65-82.

Swift, A. (2014, November 20). Fact checking the WaPo Fact Checker on Keystone XL and exports. *National Resources Defense Council*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://nrdc.org/experts/anthony-swift/fact-checking-wapo-fact-checker-keystone-xl-and-exports

Taylor, C. E., Lee, J. S., & Davie, W. R. (2000). Local press coverage of environmental conflict. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *77*(1), 175-192.

Taylor, J.D. (2014, November 12). Inside, outside and upside down. *Tioga Tribune*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://journaltrib.com

Taylor, M. J., Moran-Taylor, M. J., Castellanos, E. J., & Elías, S. (2011). Burning for sustainability: biomass energy, international migration, and the move to cleaner fuels and cookstoves in Guatemala. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 918-928.

Texas Oil and Gas Association (2018). What is fracking? *Texas Oil and Gas Association*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://txoga.org/category/what-is-fracking/Theodori, G. L. (2012). Public perception of the natural gas industry: Data from the Barnett Shale. *Energy Sources, Part B: Economics, Planning, and Policy*, *7*(3), 275-281.------. (2013). Perception of the natural gas industry and engagement in individual civic actions. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, *28*(2), 122.

Theodori, G. L., & Ellis, C. (2017). Hydraulic fracturing: Assessing self-reported familiarity and the contributions of selected sources to self-reported knowledge. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *4*(1), 95-101.

Tichenor, P. J., Donohue, G. A., & Olien, C. N. (1970). Mass media flow and differential growth in knowledge. *Public opinion quarterly*, *34*(2), 159-170.

TransCanada. (2018). Keystone pipeline system. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://transcanada.com/en/operations/oil-and-liquids/keystone-pipeline-system/

Triplett, W.R. (2013, June 21). Triplett: Railroading the Keystone XL pipeline. *Dickinson Press.* Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Turton, D. J. (2015a). Lawyers in Australia's coal seam gas debate: A study of participation in recorded community forums. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *2*(4), 802-812.

------. (2015b). Unconventional gas in Australia: towards a legal geography. *Geographical Research*, *53*(1), 53-67.

Union of Concerned Scientists. (2017). What are tar sands? *Union of Concerned Scientists*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://www.ucsusa.org/clean-vehicles/all-about-oil/what-are-tar-sands#.WspFmIjwbIU

United States Census Bureau (2017). Quick facts: North Dakota. *United States Census Bureau*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/ND

United States Energy Information Administration. (2018a). Bakken Region drilling productivity report, March 2018. *United States Energy Information* Administration. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://eia.gov/petroleum/drilling/bakken.pdf

------. (2018b). Total petroleum and other liquids production. *United States Energy Information Administration*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/data/browser/

United States International Trade Administration (2018). North Dakota Exports, Jobs, & Foreign Investment. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https:// trade.gov/mas/ian/statereports/states/nd.pdf

Unruh, G. C. (2000). Understanding carbon lock-in. *Energy policy*, *28*(12), 817-830.

Upgren, H.T. (2014, October 11). Letter: API diminishes what Measure 5 would accomplish. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Valdivia, G. (2008). Governing relations between people and things: Citizenship, territory, and the political economy of petroleum in Ecuador. *Political Geography*, *27*(4), 456-477.

------. (2015). Oil frictions and the subterranean geopolitics of energy regionalisms. *Environment and Planning A*, *47*(7), 1422-1439.

Van Dijk, T. (1994). Editorial: discourse analysis as social analysis. *Discourse and Society*, *5*(2), 163-164.

Van Teijlingen, K. (2016). The 'will to improve' at the mining frontier: Neo-extractivism, development and governmentality in the Ecuadorian Amazon. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *3*(4), 902-911.

Vesalon, L., & Cretan, R. (2015). 'We are not the Wild West': anti-fracking protests in Romania. *Environmental Politics*, *24*(2), 288-307.

Vincent, C.H., Hanson, L.A., & Argueta, C.N. (2017). Federal land ownership. *Congressional Research Service*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from https:// hsdl.org/?abstract&did=799426

Voll, M. (2014, October 27). Letter: Farmers and ranchers know to vote 'No' on Measure 5. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Wagner, V. (2014, September 29). Letter: A fan of conservation, but not the Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks Amendment. *Dickinson Press*. http://thedickinsonpress.com

Walker, G., Cass, N., Burningham, K., & Barnett, J. (2010). Renewable energy and sociotechnical change: imagined subjectivities of 'the public' and their implications. Environment and planning A, 42(4), 931-947.

Walker, G., Simcock, N., & Day, R. (2016). Necessary energy uses and a minimum standard of living in the United Kingdom: energy justice or escalating expectations? *Energy Research & Social Science*, *18*, 129-138.

Walsh, P. J., Bird, S., & Heintzelman, M. D. (2015). Understanding local regulation of fracking: a spatial econometric approach. *Agricultural and Resource Economics Review*, *44*(2), 138-163.

Ward, L. (2013). Eco-governmentality revisited: Mapping divergent subjectivities among Integrated Water Resource Management experts in Paraguay. *Geoforum*, *46*, 91-102.

Warner, B., & Shapiro, J. (2013). Fractured, fragmented federalism: A study in fracking regulatory policy. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, *43*(3), 474-496.

Watts, M. J. (2005). Righteous oil? Human rights, the oil complex, and corporate social responsibility. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, *30*, 373-407.

Weber, B. A., Geigle, J., & Barkdull, C. (2014). Rural North Dakota's oil boom and its impact on social services. *Social work*, *59*(1), 62-72.

Wenzel, K. (2015, February 2). Wenzel: Too many holes in anti-pipeline arguments. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Wescoat, J. L. (1991). Resource management: the long-term global trend. *Progress in Human Geography*, *15*(1), 81-93.

------. (1992). Resource management: Oil resources and the Gulf conflict. *Progress in Human Geography*, *16*(2), 243-256.

------. (1993). Resource management: UNCED, GATT, and global change. *Progress in Human Geography*, *17*(2), 232-240.

Widener, P. (2013). A protracted age of oil: pipelines, refineries and quiet conflict. *Local Environment*, *18*(7), 834-851.

Wilcox, E. (2011, December 10). Keystone good for the economy. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://inforum.com

Willand, M. (2014, September 12). Letter: State funds should go toward Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks Amendment. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Williamson, K. (2012). Night becomes day: Carnival, contested spaces, and the black movement in Bahia. *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, *17*(2), 257-278.

Willits, F. K., Theodori, G. L., & Luloff, A. E. (2016). Correlates of perceived safe uses of hydraulic fracturing wastewater: Data from the Marcellus Shale. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *3*(3), 727-735.

Willow, A. J. (2014). The new politics of environmental degradation: un/expected landscapes of disempowerment and vulnerability. *Journal of Political Ecology*, *21*(1), 237-257.

Willow, A. J., & Keefer, S. (2015). Gendering extraction: expectations and identities in women's motives for shale energy opposition. *Journal of Research in Gender Studies*, *5*(2), 93.

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Methods for critical discourse analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Woods, B. R., & Gordon, J. S. (2011). Mountaintop removal and job creation: Exploring the relationship using spatial regression. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *101*(4), 806-815.

Wright, R., Muma, R. D., & Radebaugh, T. S. (2016). Perceptions of Risk and Reward of Rapid Energy Exploration in Rural Kansas: Are Older Adults Different? *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, 31(2), 107.

Yates, J. S., & Bakker, K. (2014). Debating the 'post-neoliberal turn' in Latin America. *Progress in Human Geography*, *38*(1), 62-90.

Yakovleva, N. (2011). Oil pipeline construction in Eastern Siberia: Implications for indigenous people. *Geoforum*, *42*(6), 708-719.

Yergin, D. (1982). Introduction. In Liscom, W.L. (Ed.), *The Energy Decade, 1970-1980* (pp. xii-xiv). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Co.

Zaleski, J. (2014, November 13). Zaleski: It was as down and dirty as it gets. *Fargo Forum*. Retrieved from http://inforum.com

Zetocha, R. (2014, May 21). Letter: Fuglie letter misrepresents measure concerns. *Dickinson Press*. Retrieved on April 7, 2018 from http://thedickinsonpress.com

Zilliox, S., & Smith, J. M. (2018). Colorado's Fracking Debates: Citizen Science, Conflict and Collaboration. *Science as Culture*, 1-21.

Zimmerer, K. S., & Bassett, T. J. (Eds.). (2003). *Political ecology: An integrative approach to geography and environment-development studies*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Zimmermann, E.W. (1951). *World Resources and Industries*. New York, NY: Harper & Brothers.